

England; Church of - Catechism

^N
A PRACTICAL
EXPOSITION
OF THE
Church-Catechism.

In Two Volumes.

By JOHN OLLIFFE,
Rector of Dunton in Bucks.

L O N D O N :

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Factor of Dunlop & Co.

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T O

The Right Honourable

P H I L I P,

Lord Viscount WINCHENDON.

My LORD,

A *S* there is nothing in which
Mankind doth more agree
in the general, than in a
Search after Happiness;
so it is earnestly to be
wished, that they did as well agree in the
A 2 right

The Epistle Dedicatory.

right Notion of that Good, that can make them Happy, and in the Means for the attainment of it. It is certainly Almighty God alone, in whom all Fulness dwelleth, who is an inexhaustible Fountain of all Excellency and Perfection, who is the Parent of our Beings, and knoweth our Frame : It is He alone, that can fill up all our Capacities, and satisfy the utmost Desires of our Souls ; which all Creatures together are of too scanty Powers to enable them to do. For in the midst of all our Enjoyments here, when we have never so much of the good Things of the World, yet we never find any thing that can thoroughly quench our insatiable Appetite after Good ; but we still perceive an Emptiness, still find that there is something wanting, which nothing that we can meet with among the Creatures, is able to help us to. But we may easily conceive, that He that made us and all the World besides, and who is therefore above all, and better than all ; He that
gave

The Epistle Dedicatory.

gave us our Powers, and planted such Appetites in us, bath Power enough, and Goodness enough to impart unto us the fullest Satisfaction, the clearest Light, and the greatest Pleasure, and to fill us with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory. So that it is from him alone, and from his gracious Communications to us, that we can reasonably expect a compleat Felicity.

And then, my Lord, It is certain that Religion, true Practicall Religion or Godliness in its Life and Power, which is the Transcript of the Divine Nature in Man, so far as it is imitable by us, or a copying out of the Divine Will in ourselves, is that alone, that can unite us to him, and can recommend us to his Favour and Blessing, through the Mediation of our Lord Jesus. And if this be so, then it is Religion alone that is the true and proper Means for the Attainment of Happiness. This is that indeed that the World doth

The Epistle Dedicatory.

so much cry out upon, as an Abridgment of their Liberties, an intolerable Yoke and heavy Burden, which they are not able to bear, and which they often run down for Cant and Folly; but without all cause: For it depriveth us of nothing that would be truly good for us; it only layeth a restraint upon Exorbitant Passions, that would but do us harm, and corrects Irregularities in our Spirits and Lives, which it is impossible to account for to the truest Reason; and is in itself a rational thing. For it is but to will as God himself willeth, who is the measure of all Perfection, and to act according to the Nature of things, and to submit ourselves to the Rightful Authority of our Supream Governour. It is but to love God above all, who is the Chief and Sovereign Good, to resign ourselves to the dispose of Infinite Wisdom; to use all our Powers to the Glory of him that gave them to us, and to Worship and Adore him. And then, to do all good Offices in the World accord-
ing

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ing to our Capacities, to be true and Just and Charitable ; and to carry ourselves to all, as we would reasonably desire they should do to us in like Circumstances and Cases. And to be Humble in our selves, as we have cause enough from our manifold Wants and Weaknesses ; and to govern our sensitive Passions and all our Actions by Rules of Right, and not to suffer meer Inclination to have its range beyond the Bounds that Reason doth terminate. This is Religion.

And is there any thing exceptionable in all this? When we do thus, we really seek our own true Comfort and Benefit too, we are wise for ourselves, and for our own real Interest, we consult our own Advantage in many respects, and in a great measure here, and we have springing Hopes of greater Good hereafter, from the Promises of Eternal Happiness made by Almighty God thereunto. And in the mean while Religion sits easie upon our

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Spirits, never disturbs us, or causeth any Disquiet within ; which only ariseth from the Sense or Apprehension of our Guilt, and the Tyranny of ungoverned Lusts, that usurp upon our Minds, and bring Reason and Conscience itself into Bondage. So that Religion is indeed the truest Liberty, and the greatest Excellency of Man ; and if ever there was such a thing as Wisdom in the World, this is it. This raiseth and perfecteth our Natures, and makes Men Noble indeed, above all other Embellishments whatsoever ; because it makes them more like GOD, and greater Blessings to the World.

It is this, my Lord, which in this Book I endeavour to set forth, and do here presume to recommend to your Lordship ; whom I must profess to have a very high Honour for, upon the account of your Noble Extraction ; being very desirous that to your High Birth, and eminent Accomplishments, with which your early Years
are

The Epistle Dedicatory.

are already adorn'd, this also may be still added, and that your Proficiency herein may be equal to what you have made in other Learning and Studies, whereby you will come more and more to excel: And therefore, I hope, that a Book of this Nature will not be unacceptable to your Lordship. And now that you may live long upon Earth, to serve God and your Generation, and at last may Inherit everlasting Bliss in the Kingdom of Heaven, is the Hearty Prayer, of

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most Humble Servant,

John Ollyffe.

The English Dictionary.

LOG 74

1507

Yours truly,
J. H. H. H. H. H.

John O'Neil

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THE
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

AFTER Young People have learn'd the *Church-Catechism*, and been instructed in some brief Explication thereof, it may be proper to put into their Hands something that is larger ; to establish the Principles of our Holy Christian Faith, to shew the Uses of what is to be believed by us, and to set forth the several Parts of our Christian Practice, and what is to be avoided by us, and to shew the Reasons and Motives thereunto. This is what I
have

The Preface to the Reader.

have here endeavoured to do, with as much brevity and fulness together, as I could. And my great Design herein, is only to promote Practical Christianity, and therefore I have meddled very little with Controversie, which is apt to distract the Mind, and to divert too much from the One Thing necessary. It is needless to give an account by what Steps I have been led into this Performance. It was but a little matter that I first intended, but by Degrees it grew upon my Hands, till it came to that which I here present the Reader with; and which, notwithstanding the several things of this Nature, that are already in Print, I am encouraged to hope, may be also of some good Use. And I beseech Almighty God to Bless it to that End.

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AN
NEW STATE, and dedication to the service of God in
Christ Jesus: as the Children of the 7. we have
Gen. 22. 4. Lake 1. 70. Luke 2. 21. to whom this
Others sometimes I have not I have given

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CHURCH CATECHISM.

PART I.

The Christian Covenant.

SECT. I.

*Of the Benefits of Baptism, or the Mercies afforded
on God's part.*

Quest. **W**HAT is your Name?

Ans. N. or M.

Q. What do you call this Name?

A. I call it my Christian Name; which is a new
Name, added to that, which I deriv'd from my na-
tural Parents; to signify my being admitted into a
new Christian State and Relation, which by Na-

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ture

ture I was not in: And to put me in mind thereof, and of that Covenant and Privileges, which I was then engaged and interested in, and which is our great Glory and Happiness, and which I should therefore love to remember, and should rejoyce in the remembrance of.

Q. Who gave you this Name?

A. My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism, wherein I was admitted into this New State, and dedicated to the service of God in Christ Jesus; as the Children of the Jews were dedicated to the God of Israel at their Circumcision, *Gen. 21. 3, 4. Luke 1. 59. Luke 2. 21.* to whom also others sometimes, as well as their Parents, gave Names, *Ruth 4. 17.*

Q. Why is it required in our Church, that Godfathers and Godmothers should present Persons to Baptism?

A. In respect of those of riper Years, that are brought to Baptism, it is, that they may be *Witnesses* to the Church of what was then done by them, and of their being baptized, in order to their having a right to Church-Communion. And therefore it is required of such Persons, when they are presented to Baptism that they faithfully for their part **promise in the presence of these their Witnesses,** and the whole Congregation, that they will renounce the Devil, &c. And then there is a useful charge laid upon such Godfathers and Godmothers, that they Remember, that it is their part and duty, to put such baptized Persons in mind what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession they have made before the Congregation, and them their **Chosen Witnesses.** And that they also call upon them to use all diligence to be rightly instructed in God's holy Word; that so they may grow in Grace, &c. which such Witnesses therefore should make great Conscience of doing.

But

But in respect of Children, that are to be baptized, there are other ends also hereof; *not to deprive Parents of their Right of dedicating their Children to God by bringing them to this Ordinance; which they then do, tho' not immediately by themselves, yet by the Godfathers and Godmothers appointed by them for that purpose. Nor yet to free them from their Oligation, with respect to their Childrens Nurture and Education, which they are indispenfably obliged to, Deut. 6. 6, 7. Ephes. 6. 4. Gen. 18. 19.* But the ends thereof are, that seeing Children cannot answer for themselves, or transact the Covenant, or engage by themselves to perform its Conditions, these Persons should, as their *Proxies* or Representatives transact the Covenant in their behalf, express their consent, and promise for them. And then that they become Sureties to the Church for the Childrens Pious and Christian Education; especially in case of the death or neglect of the Parents, that by this additional Security they may be better taken care of: And therefore there is this great Charge given to Godfathers and Godmothers in a very solemn manner, *That they see that such Infant be taught, as soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn Vow, Promises, and Profession he hath made by them; so that he be instructed in the nature of the Covenant, which they undertook for him. And that he may know these things the better; they are chiefly to provide, that he be well instructed in his Catechism, that he learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar Tongue; and all other things, which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's health; and to take care, that he be Vertuously brought up, to lead a Godly and a Christian Life. And to that end also, they are to call upon them, to go to Church and to hear Sermons. And then it must follow, that in case of their neglect of their*

Duty in these things, that they ought to admonish and reprove them, and to do all that lieth in them, to engage them hereunto; and that they use all proper means that are consistent with their places and abilities for it. And therefore they should see, that they learn to Read, for the better fitting and capacitating of them for all besides. All which things they should either do themselves, or see that they be done, or procure to be done by others for them.

They have given their Faith to the Church for it. The Children were admitted to Baptism, upon this Trust undertaken by them. And they have a great opportunity of promoting the Glory of God, the Salvation of Souls, and the Welfare of Families, Church, and Government, to which they belong. And if they neglect their Duty herein, they falsify their Trust, and break their Faith with the Church; and they will be responsible in a great measure for the Ignorance and Sin, that such are guilty of, they turn this solemn Transaction into a meer fruitless and idle Ceremony, and do all they can to expose and ridicule it.

Q. What now doth this Catechism, in which Children are to be instructed, contain?

A. It contains the substance of the Christian or Gospel Covenant; with the Sacramental Confirmations thereof, both on God's side and Man's.

Q. Wherein is the substance of the Covenant on Gods part contained?

A. It is contained in certain Privileges, which are either common to all that belong to the visible Church of Christ, or are special and peculiar to the Subjects of God's special Favour. Both which kinds of Privileges are exprest in these words, **That I was made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritour of the Kingdom of Heaven.** Which words sometimes have a more general,

neral, and sometimes a more special signification. And to all which, by Baptism either we are immediately admitted, or have a confirm'd Title to, upon performance of the Condition requir'd on our part.

Q. Pray give me an account then of these Privileges. And first, what is it to be a Member of Christ?

A. It is to be a Member of Christ's Mystical Body the Church, of which Christ is the Head and Governour; a Member always relating to some Body; and the Church is Christ's Body, and Christ is the Head of that Body, 1 Cor. 6. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 27. Rom. 12. 5. Eph. 1. 22, 23. Eph. 5. 23. Eph. 2. 19. Col. 1. 18.

Q. How do you prove, that by Baptism we are made Members of Christ, or of Christ's Body the Church?

A. Because Christ appointed, and his Apostles always made use of Baptism to this End, as the Rite or way of Admittance into the Christian Church. As the Jews were ordered by Circumcision to be admitted into the Jewish Church; and without which they were not to be accounted Members thereof, but were to be cut off from that People, and were to have no part or share in the benefit of that Covenant, that God made with them, Gen. 17. 14. And thus, they who have been admitted into the Christian Church, have been always admitted into it by Baptism; and being baptized have been accounted Members of it, and to have a right to its Communion, but otherwise not, Mat. 28. 19. Act. 2. 41. Act. 8. 13. Act. 9. 18. Act. 10. 48. Col. 2. 11, 12.

Q. What is the benefit or advantage of this Privilege?

A. We are thereby actually Invested in all those Privileges, which we are capable of, which belong to the visible Church of Christ. Particularly, in that we are brought under the conduct of a most excellent body of Laws, and an instructive Ministry, and Promises; and partake of the Communion of Saints, and have a right to very comfortable, use-

ful and edifying Ordinances, far exceeding whatever any other People have ever enjoyed; which are given and left by Christ, as the Church's Inheritance, to conduct us to Heaven and Happiness, *Ephes. 4. 11, 12.* For which Privilege the Jewish Church was also so highly celebrated; tho' it be very short of that, which the Christian Church enjoyeth, *Deut. 4. 7. Psal. 147. 19, 20. Rom. 3. 1, 2. Rom. 9. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. 1 John 1. 2. John 1. 4, 5.*

And being thus by Christ's own Order and Institution brought to him, and dedicated to his Service, we may assure ourselves of his singular Respect and Blessing, *Mark 10. 14.* And we may be moreover assured of the conduct and influence of his Blessed Spirit, in such a measure as we have need of, for our direction in the way of Life, and for our Assistance in the doing of those things, which he requireth of us; which shall be derived down from Christ our Head, and convey'd by those Ordinances, which he hath appointed for that end, in the use thereof, *Eph. 4. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 12, 13. Eph. 4. 16. Col. 1. 19.* And we may assure ourselves of all future Blessings from him, and that he will never leave us, or forsake us, if we do our Duty to him as we ought, *Ephes. 5. 29, 30.*

Q. What is the use that we are to make hereof?

A. It should engage all those who have not yet been Baptized, to hasten to submit themselves to that Ordinance; without which, and whilst they continue in the wilful neglect thereof, now the Institution is settled, they can have no visible relation to Christ, or right to Communion with him, and with his Church, but must be accounted Strangers thereunto, *John 3. 3.* And all those, who have been Baptized into Christ, must remember, that they have thereby put on Christ; and so are obliged to transcribe his Spirit and Pattern, to be Followers of him,
and

and to walk as he walked ; to observe the Rules and to follow the Directions that he hath given them, and to die unto Sin, and to live unto Righteousness, *Gal. 3.27. Rom. 6.3,4,5.* All outward Baptism, and our Pretence to Christ and to his Church by means thereof, being not sufficient to save us, if we neglect to live up to the Obligations of our Holy Relation, or if we live wicked Lives, in contradiction to our Profession and Rule ; as the Jewish Circumcision did not profit the *Jews* to procure for them acceptance with God, whilst they continued Uncircumcised in Heart ; nor all their relation to the Temple, and performance of the outward Offices thereof, whilst they continued in Sin, and were corrupt in their Manners, *Acts 7. 51. Rom. 2. 28,29. Jer. 7. 4. Isa. 1. 11, 12, 13. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 21,22. Isa. 66. 3. Prov. 15. 8. Mat. 7. 21, 22, 23. John 15.2. 1 John 2. 3, 4.*

We must therefore keep the Commands of Christ, and observe the Laws, that he hath left for the Government of his Church ; without which we cannot expect to be owned by him, and to partake of his Blessing, *Matth. 28. 19, 20. John 15. 14.* And we must resign ourselves to Christ, as our Head, to be guided and governed by him, as Members should be by the Head ; and we should have recourse to him for suitable influences of his Blessed Spirit ; and should take heed, that we do not quench or check his holy Motions, or drive his Holy Spirit from us ; but should make choice of his assistances, and carefully imploy ourselves in the use of the means of the Spirit ; and that we bring forth Fruit according to the Means and Helps we have, *Psal. 51. 12. John 13. 13, 14. 1 Thes. 5. 19, 20. John 15. 2.* And we must avoid all sinful Pollutions, lest we defile a Member of Christ, *1 Cor. 6. 15.* And we must carry it with brotherly Love and Respect to our Fellow-Members of

the same Body, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. 1 Pet. 3. 8. Rom. 12. 10. Heb. 13. 1. and whilst we thus carry it towards him and his, we have exceeding cause to rejoyce in Christ, and in our relation to him, as our Head, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Phil. 3. 3.

Q. What is it to be a Child of God?

A. It is to be entred into, and engaged in an Holy Covenant with God, and thereby to partake of the Adoption of Sons, and to have a Right and Title to all the blessed Benefits thereof; which are here sealed and confirmed to us, and will be made good accordingly, upon our carrying ourselves, as the Children or Sons of God. Just as the Children of *Israel* became the Children of God by Covenant, by their avouching the Lord to be their God, and the Lord's avouching them to be his People, Deut. 26. 17, 18. whereby they became his Children and an holy peculiar People to him, Deut. 14. 1, 2. and therefore called the *Children of the Promise*, Gal. 4. 28. And the *Children of the Covenant*, which God made with their Fathers, Act. 3. 25. And accordingly, to them there is said to *belong the Adoption and Covenants*, Rom. 9. 4. And thus are we also predestinated to the *Adoption of Children*, by *Jesus Christ to himself*, Eph. 1. 5.

Q. How do you prove, that by Baptism we are made the Children of God?

A. It followeth from the former, because we are thereby made the Members of Christ; because all that are Christ's, are Gods', and do by vertue of that near relation to Christ as their Head, stand in a near relation to God as their Father, 1 Cor. 3. 23. *John* 17. 10. And being by Baptism also dedicated to God, and thereby entred into Covenant with him, as the *Jews* were by Circumcision, we are adopted into his Family, and are put under his inspection and care; all this being done by his Instru-

tion

ction and Appointment, and is hereby ratified and sealed to us, *Ephes. 2. 19. Gal. 4. 4, 5.*

Q. Wherein consists the Benefit or Advantage of this Privilege?

A. All this being done by God's own Appointment and Institution, whereby the Covenant on God's part is confirm'd and ratify'd to us: It encourageth us with an holy Boldness to come to God as a Father thro' Christ; with an humble Expectation of his hearing our Prayers, and relieving us in our Distresses, when we apply ourselves to him as we ought. And we may have Hope and Confidence in him, that he will accordingly take care of us, and do that which is best for us, and will have compassion upon us in our Failings, Wants, and Weaknesses upon this very account, as he is our Father, and the Father of Mercies in Christ, provided we are not guilty of any wilful undutifulness in our Carriage to him, whereby he might be provoked to reject us, or cast us off. And God will take it, as a doing Honour to him, when thus we with Faith and Trust apply ourselves to him, *2 Cor. 1. 3. Isa. 63. 15, 16. Isa. 64. 8, 9. Psal. 86. 26. Jer. 3. 4.*

For, as it is in our 27th Article, *Baptism being a sign of our Regeneration, or new Birth, whereby as by an Instrument, they who receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the True Church; the promise of Forgiveness of Sins, and of our Adoption to be the Sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed.* So that thereby we are visibly invested in a visible State of Regeneration, Pardon, Adoption, right to Christ and Life Eternal. And if we live up to this Holy Relation, that by Covenant we are engaged in, we are hereby assured of the actual conveyance of all those Blessings, in their full contents and signification, *Pf. 103. 13, 14. John. 1. 12. Ephes.*

Ephes. 1. 5. *Rom.* 8. 17, 18. *Gal.* 4. 5, 7. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17, 18.

Q. What is the use we that are to make of this?

A. Hereby we are taught and engaged, to love, honour and obey in all things our Heavenly Father, *Mal.* 1. 6. *Ephes.* 6. 1, &c. to receive his Instructions, *Proverbs* 4. 1. to submit to his Corrections, as believing they come from a merciful design to do us good, *Prov.* 3. 11, 12. *Heb.* 12. 5. to endeavour to be like him in Holiness, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14, 15, 17. *Eph.* 5. 1. and every way to walk suitably to our relation, that we may approve ourselves to be the Children of such a Father, *Mat.* 5. 16. For if we live in Wickedness and Rebellion against God, however we may call ourselves the Children of God, and may be so by external Covenant, it will not profit us; nor yet our Baptism, by which we are made so; no more than Circumcision could profit the *Jews*, that hardened themselves in wilful Disobedience against God. But our pretence to such a Relation will but rather aggravate our Sin, and encrease our Judgment, *Mat.* 3. 9, 10. *John* 8. 42, 44. *Isa.* 1. 2, 4. *Gal.* 6. 15. *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. 1 *Cor.* 7. 19.

Q. What is it to be an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven?

A. It is to be one to whom the Promise of the Kingdom of Heaven is hereby made sure. For Baptism being a Ratifying Seal of the whole Covenant on God's part, of which this Promise is the most eminent Branch; consequently Baptism, which is the Seal of the whole, is likewise a Seal of this Promise, which is a branch or part of the whole. As it likewise is of that other eminent Branch and part thereof, viz. the Promise of Remission of Sins. And therefore in the *Nicene Creed*, we profess to acknowledge also one Baptism for the

Re-

Remission of Sins; that is, for the Confirmation and Ratification of the Promise thereof, *Mark*

1. 4.

Q. Wherein consists the Excellency of this Privilege?

A. It consists in the dignity and excellency of the thing promised, as being of the most high and excellent Nature. And consequently it is a most noble and excellent Privilege to have the Promise of this Inheritance of Heaven hereby Sealed and ensured to us; so that we have hereby a legal Title and Claim thereunto ratify'd and confirm'd, upon the performance of the Condition on our part, which they that are Strangers to the Covenant and Promises do not enjoy, having God's uncovenanted Goodness only to depend upon; and thereupon can only have faint Hopes, built upon uncertain Conjectures, of a future Happines; in the strength of which it was not easy to overcome the great Temptations, they were liable to. And this is a Privilege, which they only that are Baptized into Christ or are ready to be Baptized, are brought to the ratify'd assurance of; and may thereby rely upon God, with full confidence, to make good to them the Crown of Glory, which he hath thus by a confirm'd and ratify'd Promise made them Heris to, upon their leading a Christian Life according to the Tenor of the Christian Covenant on their part, *Eph. 3. 6. Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.*

Q. What is the use that we should make thereof?

A. Having this Promise thus confirm'd to us, it should engage us to labour with the greatest diligence, to perform our part of the Covenant, that we may not fail for want thereof, of our attaining this Blessed Inheritance, *1 John 3. 3. Heb. 5. 9. Luke 13. 24. 2 Cor. 7. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 5, 9, 10, 11.* It being

being not the outward Baptism alone that doth save us, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* As the *Jews* were not saved by Circumcision, which was outward, *Rom. 2. 28.* nor because we are the visible *Children of the Kingdom*, may we expect the Inheritance upon that account alone, there being many, who are so, that shall be cast out at last, *Mat. 8. 12.* But we must also lead a Godly and a Christian Life, suitable to the design and obligation of our Baptism; which is a sealing of the Covenant only according to the Nature of the Covenant itself, but confirmeth that which is given in the Covenant, upon the performance of such Condition.

But then, having this noble Promise thus confirm'd, hereby we are taught to set a low Rate upon those earthly Things which are so infinitely inferior to this heavenly Inheritance, and to take off our Affections from them, and to fix our Minds and Joys upon that which is so glorious and eternal, and so to walk as Children of the Kingdom that have such great Things in view. *Mat. 6. 25, 33. Col. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Heb. 12. 12, 13, 15.* It being a Shame to live below our Hopes and our Profession, and Faith, which is of so high a Nature, and to lie groveling here on the Dust; as if here were all that we were made for, or had any Expectation of. But having such a Promise before us, and thus settl'd upon us, we should have our Minds erect to an high and noble looking for the same, and accordingly should have our Spirits and Conversations in Heaven, and labour to prepare for such suitable Dispositions as may fit us for that heavenly State; and shou'd disdain to be taken up only with a sensual Life which belongs to this present State, which the Men of this World do so much or only affect. *1 Jo. 3. 3. Phil. 3. 19, 20.*

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Of the Vow of Baptism : Or, the Conditions required on our Part.

Q. **Y**OU have declared to me what the Covenant is on God's Part, and what the Privileges are which you receive by Baptism, either as immediately convey'd, or as having thereby a confirm'd Title to them, upon the Performance of your Part. Now tell me therefore, what is your Part of the Covenant also; Or, What are those Duties that you are to perform, that you may partake of the full and entire Benefit thereof?

A. They are contain'd in that which my Godfathers and Godmothers then did for me.

Q. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you?

A. They did promise and vow three Things in my Name as my Representatives, expressing and declaring the Vow that I should be bound to perform; and which, if I had been baptiz'd at Age, I should in mine own Name have bound myself by Promise to, and now acknowledge what they did for me, to be my Promise and Vow, and that I am bound to perform the same, *Psal. 119. 106.*

Q. What is the First of these Things that they did promise?

A. That I should renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked world; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. That is, that I should

should inwardly hate and detest, and that I shou'd utterly reject and avoid all these Things, so far as they are evil in themselves, or as they become Occasions or Temptations to any Sin. *Jam.* 4. 7. *Eph.* 4. 27. 1 *Job.* 2. 15. *Jam.* 4. 4. *Col.* 3. 5. *Eph.* 5. 11. For it being our Duty and Covenant to love and serve God above all, and to keep his Commandments; we must therefore renounce all contrary Loves, and all other Matters and Things that may stand in opposition to him, or that may withdraw us from him, either in Heart or Life as these three, the Devil and the World, and the Flesh are continually apt to do. *2 Cor.* 11. 3. *Luke* 8. 12. *Mat.* 6. 24. *Rom.* 8. 7, 6.

Q. As to the first of these Things which you are to renounce, the Devil and all his Works, What mean you by the Devil?

A. The Devil was by Creation an holy Angel, (as God made all Things good at the first) perhaps the highest, or one of the highest of the Angelical Order; of which there were many Myriads created at the Beginning, all of a spiritual Nature, and of great Understanding and Power, many of which stand still in their Integrity, and are the chief Ministers of God's Kingdom, *Dan.* 7. 10. But this Prince of Angels having fallen from God, thro' Pride and Discontent and Presumption of his own Strength and Excellency, is become an Arch-rebel against God, together with many other Angels whom he drew into the same Conspiracy with himself; all which therefore being cast off by God, and put out of that glorious State in which they were created, are ever since become implacable and irreconcilable Enemies to Him, affecting a Kingdom by themselves, and setting themselves to oppose God's Government; and have all along made it their constant Business to draw as many of us
also

also as they can into the same Rebellion, and into the same State of Perdition and Misery with themselves; whereby they shew themselves to be no less dangerous and destructive Enemies to us also, and therefore ought all, one as well as another, to be renounc'd by us. The Word *Devil* being a common Name given in Scripture, to all those wicked Spirits of which there are many Legions, *Mark* 5. 9. *Mat.* 12. 24. *Rev.* 12. 7. 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. 2 *Cor.* 6. 15. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Mat.* 13. 39. *Luke* 8. 12. *Jo.* 8. 44. 1 *Tim.* 3. 6, 7. *Eph.* 2. 2.

All these wicked Angels we are to renounce, so as never to do any Homage, or pay any Worship or Respect to any of them, which is the highest Abomination and extremest Madnes, *Lev.* 17. 7. *Deut.* 32. 17. 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. nor to retain any Familiarity, or make any Contracts with them, as Witches and Conjurers do. 1 *Chr.* 10. 13, 14. *Lev.* 20. 6. *Deut.* 18. 10, 11, 12. *Gal.* 5. 20. nor ever to follow or to be led by them, or by their Temptations to any Sin which they would draw us to. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. *Luke* 22. 31. *Eph.* 6. 11, 16. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. And we are to renounce all their Adherents as Witches and Conjurers are, so as never to resort to them, or to have any Dealings with them, or any way to favour or encourage them in their black and diabolical Arts, *Lev.* 20. 6.

Q. What do you mean by the Works of the Devil?

A. All Sin whatsoever, as being originally from him, and being that, which by his Temptations and Suggestions Men are drawn into, 1 *John* 3. 8. 1 *Thes.* 3. 5. especially those Sins, which are directly levelled against God, and have an immediate tendency to rob him of his Honour, and that do most signify and imply an owning of the Devil's dark Kingdom, and giving some sort of honour to him. As Idolatry, Charming, Witchcraft, resorting to such

as use undue Arts, for the recovering of Health, or of their lost Goods, or to know their Fortune, *1 Cor.* 10. 20. *Duet.* 18. 10, 11, 12. *Act.* 13. 8. And then, such Sins as do more particularly express the Devil's Temper, as Pride, and Discontentedness with ones own Condition arising therefrom, *1 Tim.* 3. 6. Envy and grudging at others good and well-fare, *Jam.* 3. 14, 15. Malice and Hatred against others, *1 John* 3. 15. *Ephes.* 4. 26, 27. And those Sins, which are more the Practise of the Devil himself; as Lying, *John* 8. 44. Treachery, *John* 6. 70, 71. Hypocrisy, *2 Cor.* 11. 13, 14. Tempting and Seducing others to Sin, *Mat.* 4. 3. *Acts* 13. 10. *2 Cor.* 11. 3. *1 Thes.* 3. 5. Murder, *John* 8. 44. Calumniating and Slandering, *Job* 1. 9, 10. *Rev.* 12. 10. *Jam.* 3. 6. Apostacy from God, *Jude* 6.

All which Sins, we should labour to have a right and judicious understanding of the evil of, that we may condemn them in our Judgments, and resolve against them in our Wills, and shun them, and utterly depart from them in our Practise; and watch against all the approaches of them, and all Temptations to them, as being most foul and vile Iniquities, to the utmost of our power, *Psal.* 119. 104, 113, 128, 163. *2 Tim.* 2. 19. *Isa.* 55. 7. *1 John* 3. 9.

Q. Why must we renounce the Devil and all his Works?

A. Because he is the great, constant, and implacable Enemy of God and Man, and that continually seeks our Ruin, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. And yet by shewing or paying any respect to him or his Adherents, and by doing of any of these things, which he tempteth to, and living in the practice, or under the power of them, we do gratify this our grand and common Enemy, whom we ought to abhor; and we do serve his Interest, and promote his Kingdom

Kingdom, which we ought to conceive the utmost Indignation against, *1 John 3. 8. 1 John 5. 18.* and by thus complying with the Devil, who is God's Enemy, we take his part against God, our Creator, and kind Benefactor and best Friend, which we ought to detest; and we declare ourselves Enemies against God, and by siding with his Arch-rebel, we resist his Authority and oppose his Government, *Acts 13. 10.* And thereby we justly provoke his Indignation against us, whose favour is better than life itself, which it is wonderful folly to do, *Deut. 32. 6, 18. 1 Cor. 10. 22.* we contradict the design of him, who came to be our Saviour, *1 John 3. 8. Matth. 1. 21. Acts 3. 26.* and we do despite to the Spirit of Grace, *Heb. 10. 29.* we act foolishly, and contrary to the Nature and Reason of Things, *1 Sam. 13. 13. Prov. 19. 3. Prov. 8. 5.* we hurt ourselves, and always bring some damage or harm or other to our own Souls and Bodies; and lay a Foundation for Disorder and Mischief in the World. And by all this we take a ready Course to make our selves Miserable for ever, *Psal. 50. 22. Jer. 7. 19. Jer. 2. 17, 19. Jer. 3. 9, 10, 11.*

Q. What is the Second Enemy that you are to renounce?

A. This Wicked World, with all its Pumps and Vanities.

Q. What mean you by this Wicked World?

A. The Wicked Men of the World, who are joined in a Confederacy with the Devil, as his Servants and Agents, and as willing Slaves to him, to set forward his usurpt Authority and to promote his dark Kingdom: And that live in obedience to many sinful Lusts and Passions, to which they are excited by him, and thereby gratify and please him, and that do practise Ungodliness and Wrong, in opposi-

sition to God and Goodness, and all that is Holy and Divine, 1 *John* 5. 19. *Eph.* 2. 1, 2. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Matth.* 12. 45.

Q. How must we renounce these?

A. It is not to be understood, that we are altogether to desert their Society, or that we are to have no company with them, which it is not possible in this World wholly to avoid, in this mixture of good and bad together; unless we forsake all Trading and Commerce, and wholly throw off a social Life; which we are not bound to do, 1 *Cor.* 5. 10. *John* 17. 15, 16. 1 *Cor.* 7. 10, 13. Sometimes Necessity, sometimes Relation, sometimes Charity will call us out to a certain Communion with them. And sometimes they that live very wicked Lives in some respects, and that give very bad Examples to others of several Vices, yet upon other accounts are very useful Members in the World, and deserve Honour for many worthy Endowments, skill in Arts, sagacity in Invention, love to their Country, Generosity, Courtesy, Courage, &c. And we must render honour to whom honour is due, upon what account soever, *Rom.* 13. 7.

Nor is there hereby required a fanciful singularity in little things, that are neither commanded nor forbidden to us; nor that we should stand off as far as we can from the Customs and Fashions of other Men, that are innocent in themselves, and are no way matters of just Scandal or Offence; which is apt to be censured for humoursome affectation, and to arise from Pride or Peevishness, or a vain Self-conceit, to the diminution of Charity, and Good-will among Men, which ought by all lawful means to be avoided. And it is taken for a violation of, and incroachment upon Christian Liberty, and a needless restraint of it; which in Cases, wherein there is not apparent reason for it, will

will be thought an unreasonable Tyranny in Conversation, and may sometimes without any cause be of very ill Consequence.

But this is the thing, that is required in Renouncing this *Wicked World*, that we avoid all needless Society with the Wicked Men of it, as far as is expedient, and as may be consistent with that Duty we owe to them, and that we must have no voluntary fellowship with them without just reason; that we may not learn their ways, which by an unnecessary, or unreasonable Conversation with them, we shall be apt to do; Vice being of a very infectious nature and apt to propagate its self, so that by too great an Intimacy with it we shall be apt to be transformed into its likeness, or at least it will be quickly apt to abate, and to bring a chilness upon a Virtuous Zeal, and to deaden Devotion; and to take off by degrees that aversion to many things, which was before the Christian's Guard against inordinacy and excess, and to produce a dangerous relish to others, Prov. 23. 20. *Be not amongst Wine-bibbers; amongst riotous eaters of Flesh.* Prov. 4. 14, 15. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.* Prov. 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house.* 2 Theff. 3. 6. *Withdraw yourselves from every brother, that walketh disorderly.* Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this world.* Deut. 18. 9. Jer. 10. 2. Prov. 13. 20. Prov. 22. 25. Psal. 26. 4, 5. Psal. 1. 1. Psal. 101. 4, 5. Psal. 139. 21. Psal. 120. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 14. Gal. 1. 4. Exod. 23. 2.

If we are obliged to be in the Company of Evil Men, we must take great care that we be not tempted by their Examples to the committing of any Sin; and that we be not drawn away by any of their Flatteries, Friendship, Insinuations of any
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20 *Of Renouncing Poms and Vanities.*

kind to do any sinful thing. But we must resolutely depart from all their sinful Customs, Fashions and Practices, and all the dangerous occasions thereof; we must shew our dislike of them, and some way or other bear our Testimony against them, *Ephes. 5. 7, 8, 10, 11.*

Q. What mean you by the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World?

A. By *Poms* were antiently meant, those Pompous Spectacles and Shows, and Sword-Plays that were set out in the Pagan Theaters, for the Diversion of the People; and those other Plays that were acted in memory of their False Gods on the Heathen Festivals, *1 Cor. 10. 7.* To which many of our profane and lewd Plays acted in our Play-houses, have not been inferiour in Impiety and malevolent Influence. To which Plays also of the Heathen may be added, the Heathen Processions, in honour of their Gods. To which the Idolatrous Processions of the Papists, in honour of the Saints do answer now. To which may also be reduc'd the Dances, and Revels, and drunken Riots of abundance of our People at our Wakes and Festivals; which do highly tend to the Corruption of the Manners of our Youth, and the propagating Impiety, to the promoting of the Devil's Kingdom, and the lessening of God's Kingdom of Light and Holiness. And therefore as the antient Christians were bound to abstain from all those Shows and Customs; so ought Christians now, that are concerned for the honour of our Saviour, and promoting of True Religion, not only to abstain from, but also to oppose all those other Antichristian Practices, that are any way parallel thereunto; which serve only to please and gratify the Flesh, and to set forward Ungodliness and Irreligion among Men, *Ephes. 4. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 10. 21. Phil. 2. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 9.*

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By *Pomps and Vanities* also may be meant, the *Glory and Pride of Life*, which is so much affected in this World, and the *Inordinate love of Riches*, which Men do commonly set their Hearts so much upon, and place their chief Delight and Happiness in; but which ought to be renounced by every good Christian, *Acts 25. 23. Eccl. 4. 7, 8.*

Q. What is that Love of Riches, that is to be renounced by us?

A. Riches and Estates in this World, are neither to be despised, nor yet to be overvalued by us. They are middle things, and are neither good nor bad in themselves, but according to the ends and uses that they are put to. They are upon some accounts and to some purposes very valuable, and are to be look'd upon as Blessings from Almighty God to those that have them, when they are made to subserve to any of these allowable or good ends and purposes. But there are a great many other respects, in which they can do nothing for us. They serve to feed and maintain the Body, and to pleasure and gratify the Senses with many innocent Enjoyments. They serve to accommodate this present Life with many Conveniencies and Comforts, and give a Man many advantages above what others have that want them. They help a Man to Means of improving himself, and to furnish himself with other Mens Abilities. Rich Men are not so straitly ty'd to bodily Labour for their present Maintenance, and are not burdened with so many Distractions how to live, or provide for themselves and Families, as poorer Men are. Riches keep Men from being burdensome and troublesome to others; and they commonly help a Man to Power and Authority over others, by which he may become instrumental to serve God in his Generati-

on more than others can. And thereby Rich Men are capacitated to do great things, to carry on generous designs, and to perform many eminent Services to the Publick, and to their Friends and Brethren above other Men: For *Wealth maketh many Friends*, Prov. 19. 4. And *Money answereth all things*, Eccl. 10. 19. And therefore for these ends, Riches may be respected by us. They may be lawfully enjoyed, when Men have them, whether they are derived to them from their Ancestors, or procured by their own Skill and Labour thro' the Divine Blessing upon their use of lawful means. And thus when they come to them, they are thankfully to be accepted at God's Hands, and so are accordingly to be used; nor ought Men to squander or waste away their Estates, which are God's Blessings to them, by Idleness or Negligence, by play or gaming, or by profuse and riotous Living, or by imprudent or unseasonable giving, when there is no cause, or for no good end. Nor is Thrift or Frugality of Living, and sparing of needless Expences, Industry in Business, Prudence and Wariness in Bargaining and Contracts, or denying the Importunate or unreasonable cravings of others, a necessary sign of Covetousness, or an inordinate Love of Riches.

But yet such there may be, and we must take great care that we do not over-value, or over-love them; as Men certainly do. *First*, When they look upon them as their chief Good or Treasure, which they are not, *Matth. 6. 19.* or when they disesteem every thing else in comparison of them; when they think little of Grace, and of all the things of the Kingdom of God, and have little respect to the Promises; but all seem insipid Trash to them in comparison of Riches, *Matth. 6. 33.* when Riches are made Mens Idol, and all things

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are made to bow down to them, and all the Riches of Christ are undervalu'd, *Phil. 3. 8. 9. Matth. 13. 45.* when the Love of Riches shuts out the Love of God, or divides the Heart between God and them, and so destroys his Worship, and hinders the Devotion of the Soul, or turns it all into meer Formality, or superficial Performance, *Matth. 6. 24. 1 John 2. 16.* When the Word of God is slighted, Ordinances neglected, or Sabbaths profaned, or become a meer weariness to Men, and nothing is favour'd or relish'd, but what relates to this present Life, and Animal State only, *Amos 8. 5.* So that upon these Accounts Men become immoderately greedy and ambitious of getting Wealth; as they plainly are, when the love thereof, and the desire of getting Wealth doth fill the Mind with distracting and tormenting Cares, beyond the use of lawful Means, or makes them labour principally for the same. *Job. 6. 27.* Or when it puts Men upon the use of unjust and unlawful Means to compass a Design; as when it makes Men deceitful in their Dealings; treacherous or perfidious in their Words and Covenants; or when it causeth any oppression of the Poor, cheating of Orphans, corruption of Witnesses, forging of Deeds and Evidences, Theft, Robbery, Sacrilege, Lying, Perjury, falsifying of Trusts, detaining of others Rights, or with-holding their Dues; when it makes Men quarrellsome or litigious upon every slight Occasion; when it causeth publick Tumults, or domestick Brawls; when it makes Magistrates unjust, or abusing their Power, or invading of other Mens Rights; when it makes Servants purloining, Pilferers or false; when it hardens the Heart against those that are in Want, closeth the Hands, and shuts the Purse; when it takes away Pity and Compassion from the Rich, and makes greedy Poor, or in any respects

respects makes Men ravenous or like Beasts of Prey one to another. It is plain upon any of these or such like Signs, that the Love of the World, and of the Enjoyments thereof is become inordinate and hath got too great an ascendant within, *1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.*

And so it is, when Men delight inordinately in the possession of them, and when they place their Trust and Confidence in their Riches, *1 Tim. 6. 17. Prov. 18. 11.* or when they use them only to make provision for the Flesh, *Rom. 13. 14.* when it fills them with Pride or Ostentation, *Is. 39. 2, 6.* or when the Possession they enjoy makes them scornful or insulting over others, or despising those of inferior Degree, as if they were not of the same Kind; or when at last they cannot part with them upon any account whatsoever, but will rather make shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, and turn Apostates from God and his Truth. All such love and affectation of Riches, all such desire of them, and all such delight in them as produces any of the aforesaid Effects; that alienates the Heart from God, makes Men negligent of their Souls good, or to delay or procrastinate Repentance or Conversion, or to be unjust and uncharitable to Men, or mindless of Death and Eternity; is inordinate, and too much a great deal, and is to be diligently watch'd against, resisted and renounced.

Q. Why must this Love of Riches be renounced by us?

A. Because all the Riches in the World do not deserve such Love, nor are sufficient to justify it, or to bear it out. For our Love should be proportioned to the Nature and Value of Things. But Riches, tho' they are valuable upon divers accounts, yet as hath been said, they are not our Chief Good, nor are they the proper Means for the attainment thereof, and therefore ought not to be respected by us as such. For whatever use they are of, they are
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not sufficient of themselves to make us truly happy, or to procure true Happiness for us; which consists in a full Possession and Enjoyment of all that Good which is suitable and proportionable to our Rational Natures, and that may give us perfect delight and satisfaction within; which all the things in the World are not able to do. Of which this is a plain demonstration, That in all our earthly Injoyments we are still sensible of emptiness and want, and are desirous of change; and are craving for more, to make up what is wanting to us, *Eccles. 1. 8. 2. 11. and 5. 10.* The Reason of all which is, because these things are unsuitable and inadequate to the Capacities and Desires of our Immortal Souls, which are still reaching after a full and perfect Good; and which they can find in none but God, and in his gracious Communications to them. And therefore in order to the attainment of full and perfect Happiness, we must seek God for our Portion, live to God as our End, seek after Happiness in him, in Conformity to him, and in the Injoyment of him: He only being a Suitable, Full and All-sufficient Good, who is able to fill up all our Capacities, to satisfy all our Desires, and to do for us infinitely above what we are able to ask or think, *Psal. 73. 25. and 16. 5. Eph. 3. 20.*

God is able to perfect our Natures, and to fill us with Joy, and Delight, and Comfort. But these Things here are but shadows of that Sufficiency, which they seem to promise to us, and can do nothing for us as to our main Interest. They may help to Means of improving our Understanding, and enriching our Minds, if we will make use of them to that End; but they cannot of themselves cure one Distemper in our Souls, they do not one jot heal any Man's Blindness, or mend his Judgment, or impart right Notions to him: They do
not

not cure any Man's Frenzy or Madneſs, his diſorderly Appetites or ſinful Luſts; but are rather apt to increaſe them, without great Watchfulneſs and Circumſpection: They do not rectify our Tempers, or reſtore our Natures, or refine our Spirits; and yet till this is done, we cannot be Happy. They do not at all heal the Conſcience, or ſoften the Heart, or captivate Mens Paſſions, or pacify a wounded Spirit. But they rather tend, thro' Mens Corruption, to bribe and corrupt the Judgment, and to inrage the Fleſh. Never was any Man more holy, or humble, or meek, or ſelf-denying, for being rich; but many times Men grow more proud, and ſelf-conceited, and insolent thereby; they never help a Man to pray better, or to fear God, or to truſt in him; but oftentimes they incline to the quite contrary. Not that they do ſo in their own Natures; but in this depraved State Men are apt to abuſe them, rather than uſe them well, as they always do when they love them inordinately; but however in themſelves they can do nothing towards the bettering of the Inward Man; but where this Love of them prevails, there they will do the quite contrary, 1 Tim. 6. 9. So that tho' they may be reſpected for their proper Uſes, yet they are not to be over-loved, becauſe they can do ſo little for us in our main concerns; but inſtead of that, this over-loving of them will ſpoil all. For Gold and Silver, and Lands and Treasures, are nothing to the Inward Man.

And as we are Sinners here, neither can they do any thing for us, to relieve us in that reſpect: They cannot procure for us the removal of our Guilt, pardon of Sin, or reconciliation with God; they cannot ſave a Man from Wrath or Hell, or buy him out of it, Matth. 19. 23. Pſal. 50. 9. and
51. 16,

51. 16, 17. *Mic.* 6. 6. *Prov.* 11. 4. *Ezek.* 7. 19. They never recommend a Man to God, or procure his Favour, or are so much as Signs of it: No Man was ever beloved of God, meerly for his being rich, or honoured among Men. For God seeth not as Man seeth; nor respects any Man for his outward Trappings, but for his Divine Temper, for his Holiness, and Good-works only, *Eccles.* 9. 1.

Nor can they so much as keep off Sickness, or prevent Death, or Diseases the Harbingers thereof. Riches will never make any One's Constitution Immortal; but only may help at last to a better Vault, or a finer Tombstone: Nor can they comfort any One, when he is going hence, or relieve him under his Pains or Agonies, *Job* 3. 14. *Eccles.* 9. 5, 6. *Luke* 12. 19. *Pf.* 49. 6, 7, 8, &c. Nor will they go with any Man into the other World, or help him to an higher Place, nor will be of any availment towards his future Blessedness, but as they have been used and improved here, *Eccles.* 5. 15, 16. *1 Tim.* 6. 6. *Luke* 16. 9. So that they cannot hold long, nor will be of any long use to any Man; but will like Vapours vanish away.

And whatever they are, that are so admir'd here among Men; yet there are infinitely better Things than these; and so do accordingly deserve and justly call for our Delight and Thoughtfulness, our Respect and Love, and Care; and to neglect those better Things, and to incur the danger of losing them for the sake of these that are less, must needs be most amazing Folly, *Prov.* 4. 7. *Eccles.* 12. 13. *Matth.* 16. 26. *1 Tim.* 6. 11. *Luke* 13. 24. *Phil.* 2. 12. *2 Pet.* 1. 10. *2 Cor.* 4. 18. and 5. 1. And yet by this very inordinate Love to these lower Things, we shall incur this Danger; because by this idolatrous Affection, as all Coverousness and inordinate Love of the World is Idolatry, *Col.* 3. 5. *Eph.* 5. 5.

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5. 5. the Creature being set up in the room of the Creator, and this present Life with its good Things being prefer'd before the next, and the Heart and Mind of a Man being so sensualiz'd with them, he will be render'd unfit for the purer Injoyments of Heaven, and will provoke God to leave him to his own foolish choice here.

And yet that which sheweth the Folly of it more, is, That this inordinate Affection will not suffer a Man to enjoy that Contentment in these things whilst he hath them, as a more moderate and regular Affection would do. For as to those Things, the more his Appetite is carry'd out after them, the more insatiable still will he be, and the more he will be a-thirst. And if the Mind be squared and fitted to fewer Enjoyments, where there is convenient Provision, such a Person shall have more Quiet and Rest, than he that hath more, when his Mind is let loose, and groweth too big for what he hath. So that the best way to contentment is to restrain desire.

Q. What is that Pride of Life, that is to be renounced by us?

A. That we may be able to make a right Judgment in this matter, it is to be considered, that there are some things which may be censured for Pride in Men, which really are not, nor are just signs of it, but may be sometimes a matter of Duty to them, and of just obligation upon them. It is not Pride for Men, that are truly conscious to themselves of any abilities or gifts or Graces that they are endued with, which God hath confer'd upon them, to be sensible of, or to have a due esteem of the same, that they may give God the praise thereof, and use them to his Glory; which they cannot do, unless they be sensible of them and know them. Nor is it Humility to deny or extenu-

extenuate them ; which would be an unthankful baseness of Spirit, and would be to withhold that Tribute and Homage of Praise and Love, which are due to God for them ; and would be to render them useless to those ends for which they are given them, *Psal.* 4. 3. and 33. 1. and 34. 1. Nor is it Pride in Men to endeavour to get, and to maintain a good Name and Esteem in the World ; which is of great use to render Men serviceable in their places, and to procure acceptance of their Services, to the Glory of God and the good of others. And therefore they should be careful to avoid whatever may be justly look'd upon a blemish or spot, or diminution of their Reputations, *Eccl.* 7. 1. *Prov.* 22. 1. and 15. 30. *Phil.* 4. 8. and 2. 15. *Rom.* 12. 17. 2 *Cor.* 8. 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 12. and 1 *Pet.* 3. 16.

But yet it is no Pride to maintain a necessary and sober singularity in that which is Good, to be cautious of Sin, and jealous of Temptation ; and therefore for a Man to be wary of his Company, and to be watchful and reserved when he is in any danger of contracting any Harm or Defilement thereby ; It being of the greatest necessity to a Man's present and eternal Welfare, to keep the Conscience clean and free from Guilt, and to fear the just upbraidings thereof, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *Gen.* 19. 9. *Pf.* 69. 10. Nor is it Pride for Men to be tenacious of Right, nor to be stiff and resolute in the defence of the Truth, against pernicious Errors, and to maintain the Cause of God against Atheistical or Heretical Contradictors. But it would be softness and baseness of Spirit not to do it. We must not yield to other Men in Error or Sin to get the Reputation of Humility or Good Nature, *Jude* 3. *Gal.* 2. 5, 11. Nor is it Pride not to submit oneself blindly to others Judgments, especially in any weighty Things, and not to receive their Dictates with an implicit Faith,

Faith, whatsoever Church or Persons there may be which would impose the same upon us, *Acts* 17. 11. 1 *Job* 4. 1. 'Tis no Pride to have and to express a zeal for Vertue and Goodness, to oppose Sin, or for those to whom it doth belong to reprove or correct it, *Is.* 58. 1. 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. 2 *Chr.* 25. 16. 'Tis no Pride for Men to maintain the Dignity of their Places and Offices, in their Garb, Carriage and Behaviour; for Superiors to keep their due distance from their Inferiors, and to preserve themselves from Contempt which would be apt to arise from an equal Familiarity, *Mat.* 11. 8. 'Tis no Pride to oppose others unjust Incroachments, or violation of Liberties, or unjust abuses of Power; but it is a Debt that all owe to themselves, and to their Country, for the Publick Good. *Act.* 23. 3. *Jo.* 18. 23. *Act.* 16. 37. 'Tis no Pride for any one to vindicate his own Innocence, or to plead the Cause of Virtue against Reproaches and Calumnies, or to maintain his good Name and Honour; nor yet for a Man to set forth his own laudable Acts in a decent and humble Manner, when it is necessary for the Interest of Religion, the Honour of God, or Good of Men; to procure himself an honest Reputation for good Ends and Purposes, to stir up the dull and discouraged Spirits of Men to any Good, or to excite and kindle in them an holy Emulation thereof, 2 *Cor.* 11. 1. and 12. 1. *Phil.* 3. 17. 2 *Thess.* 3. 7. Nor yet is it Pride modestly to seek by proper Methods and Means, or to accept of any Office or Place of Honour, which any one may be capable of, for the same good Ends, for the promoting of God's Honour, or the publick or private Good of Church, or Kingdom, or of a Man's Self and Relations, without Detriment or Injury to any other, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1. These are none of the Instances of the Pride of Life, that a Man is bound to renounce.

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But Pride is founded in an over-weening Conceit of a Man's own Merit or Excellency, above what it really is, either in kind or degree; which puts him upon an inordinate self-exalting, and seeking after Esteem and Honour from Men, that they may entertain the same Opinion of him which he hath of himself above his Merit or Desert; and with such great Eagerness and deep Concern, as if it were his greatest Good or Happiness; or for no higher Ends than the gratifying of an ambitious Mind, or an high Stomach: And when he makes a shew of any, or all of this, in any instance or part of his Carriage towards God or Man.

As when Men can see little or no defect in themselves, to stir up in them any Humiliation or Confession of Sin, or bemoaning their own Wants and Infirmities, or seeking out for Justification by the Blood of Christ, or Sanctification by his Spirit, as if they had no need of these things, because they are already full and well in their own Conceits, *Jo. 9. 40. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Phil. 3. 7, 8. Rev. 3. 17.* when they can see no need of Prayer or Dependence upon God, for his Guidance or Blessing, because they either are not sensible of Want, or think to work it out of themselves, that they have need of, *Pf. 10. 4, 5, 6.* when being confident of their own Strength, they are fearless of any Dangers or Temptations, but rush into Evil without any Care, *Prov. 14. 16. Prov. 22. 3.* And when they have done any good, they take the Glory of all to themselves, as if it was brought to pass by their own Skill or Power, and glory in their own Strength or Counsel, *Jer. 9. 23, 24.* When Men hardly acknowledge any such thing as Mercies, as if all they had were but beneath their Merit; so that they are as little imploy'd in Thanksgiving as they

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they are in Prayer, unless it be only in Formality, *Gen. 32. 10. Col. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 19.* But when they meet with any Affliction they are Querulous and Impatient, as if they had some wrong done them ; and if they are not in that Place or Station which their aspiring Minds are reaching after, as not having their proper and just Desert, *Mic. 7. 9. Job 23. 11.* And when their stubborn Wills are still contradicting the Divine Will, so that they are hardly brought to Obedience, *Neb. 9. 16. Prov. 19. 3.*

And when they are only for those things both for Matter and Manner, in and by which they may have Applause from Men ; and at last look more at the Applause they have, than at any Good they do ; and when they miss of this they are more concerned and troubled, than at their missing the success of the Work itself, valuing their own esteem among Men more than the serving of God, or their Generation, *Matth. 6. 2, 5.* And when they cannot endure that any thing should be look'd upon as well done by others, but what themselves have a hand in ; and grudge at others esteem or commendation, as thinking it all to be an eclipsing of their own, *Phil. 1. 18.* And when they love to be trumpeting out their own Praises, and setting out their own Works, for no other end but vain estimation sake, that they may be commended and admired ; and when they are glad at any Blemish or disreputation that doth befall anothers Name, that they themselves thereby may be more respected ; 'tis Pride that is the cause of all this, *2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. Jam. 3. 5. Act. 5. 36. Prov. 27. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 15.*

But it is still a greater Indication of Pride, and Uncharitableness and Injustice all together, when Men can slander and backbite their Neighbour, to raise their own Reputation upon the ruine of another's. And so it is on the other side, to flatter and

and sooth Men in their Vanity and Sin, thereby to purchase their Esteem or to make an Advantage thereof to their own Rising or Preferment. Innumerable almost are the Instances of Pride in Mens seeking their own Honour above the Glory of God, and doing Good in the World, which should be our chief End, *Jo. 12. 42.* and the same is also discovered in their Converse with Men; tho' a warm Temper seen in an humble Man can hardly forbear the discovering itself in Conversation and Dispute, especially upon any weighty Matter; yet when Men expect that all their Dictates should be taken for Oracles, and can bear no Contradiction in any thing, nor to have any Point scan'd that they magisterially lay down; 'tis too great a Sign of an high Opinion of themselves; or when they cannot bear to be under others in any thing, or to have their own Understanding so much as question'd, or cannot endure to be in any Place or State of Subjection, but must only command and govern: Or when Men are in any superior Post, they love to impose only for Imposition sake, to shew their Authority, when no wise or good End is to be attain'd thereby; and tho' they have Infirmities themselves, yet they can have no Compassion on others, but are insolent and imperious in their Carriage to them, for the least Failure or Error; when Men can see Motes in other Mens Eyes, but are not sensible of the Beams in their own, as if in them there was nothing amiss; when they are quarrellsome and contentious in their Conversation, raising of Strife, and making of Bate, *Prov. 13. 10. and 21. 24. and 28. 25.* When tho' they are too often apt to slight and contemn others, and to commit Injustice and Wrong, yet they can bear themselves not the least Affront or slighting, or Offence, but have often very hard and implacable

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Resentments

Resentments for very little Causes, and expect the lowest Submission, before they will be reconcil'd. And tho' they are so forward in censuring others, and as much deserve Censure themselves, yet they scorn Reproof for the most apparent Follies or Enormities, and hate those that do that good Office to them, and love none but their own Admirers and Flatterers, *Prov. 15. 12. and 9. 7, 8.* When they cannot bear so much as being thought to do any thing amiss, but will either justify or extenuate their Faults, so that there is hardly any thing harder than to bring them to Confession thereof; 'tis Pride that is the Cause of all these Things, and such like.

It is Pride that makes Men stubborn and refractory, contradicting and self-will'd, unruly, and Despisers of others. 'Tis Pride that makes Men in high Places, cruel, tyrannical, and oppressive; and that makes Subjects usurping and impatient of the Yoke: 'Tis Pride that makes stubborn Servants and disobedient Children; censorious, quarrellsome, or contentious Neighbours: 'Tis Pride that makes Persons to affect outward Grandeur and Greatness, above their Condition; to hunt after high Places and Preferments, only that they may live great, or have Honour from Men: 'Tis Pride that makes many to affect sumptuous Houses, or rich Furniture, above their Abilities; Titles of Honour and Respect above their Merit and Quality; costly apparel exceeding their Rank, and to undue Ends: 'Tis Pride join'd with Ignorance and Folly about the Nature of Things, and a mean groveling Spirit together, that makes any to place their Happiness in such Things as these, or in the Admirations and Applauses of others: 'Tis Pride that is the Cause of Mens bearing themselves in any thing above their Degree;

Degree ; of all that haughty and supercilious Carriage that is amongst Men ; and of much of that Luxury and Excess that is in Garb, Attire, House and Provision, above the Nature of their Place, and for no other End, but vain Ostentation. Now tho' no Man is bound to neglect a good Name, or to be base, sneaking or dejected in his Spirit or Carriage, yet all this Pride ought to be renounced by us, as unsuitable either to our Human or Christian State, and considering our Capacity and Condition, either as poor, weak, helpless, and depending Creatures, or as Criminals and Sinners : All this Pride therefore we must labour to mortifie.

Q. What Considerations are there farther to move to the Renouncing of this Pride ?

A. It should be sufficient for us, that God hath so declared his Indignation against, and utter Detestation, and Abomination of this Spirit and Carriage, *Prov.* 6. 16. and 16. 5. and 8. 13. *Psal.* 18. 27. *Luke* 1. 51. And therefore he doth often threaten it with his Judgments. *Prov.* 16. 18. and 29. 23. *Isa.* 10. 12, 13, &c. and 14. 10, 11, &c. and 23. 7, 8, 9. and 28. 1, 2, 3. and many Instances we have of his doing accordingly, *Dan.* 4. 30. *Act.* 12. 21. 2 *Chr.* 32. 25. 2 *Sam.* 24. So we see in the Story of *Benbadad* and *Rabshakeb*, and *Sennacherib*, and *Goliath*, the *Philistine* of *Gath*, and *Haman*, &c. On the other side we have an Account of the great Acceptableness of Humility to him, and how it procureth his Grace and Favour, *Psal.* 51. 17. *Isa.* 66. 2. and 57. 15. *Psal.* 34. 18. *Prov.* 16. 19. and 18. 12. and 22. 4. *Mat.* 23. 12. *Mat.* 18. 4. 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. and accordingly we have many Exhortations to it, *Jam.* 4. 10. *Col.* 3. 12. 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. And we have the great Pattern and Example of the Son of

God to recommend it to us, *Mat.* 11. 29. *Mat.* 12. 16, 17, 18. *Phil.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *Jo.* 13. 3, 4, &c.

And no wonder that God doth so declare himself against the proud Man that is of such a Temper, that hath so much Evil in it. Pride is a meer idolizing of Self, and a doing Despight or offering Contempt to God, who is the Fountain of all Perfection and Excellency, whilst the proud Man takes the Glory of all to himself, as if God were not concern'd in it, *Psal.* 10. 4, 13. It hath its Pedigree from the Devil, and is an Imitation of him, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. It is the lifting up a Man's self above his Measure, and of breaking his Rank and Order which he should observe; it is a starting out of his Place, and taking upon him more than is meet, and an offering Contempt to others, which is the Cause of so much Disorder and Confusion in the World, in Families, in Neighbourhoods, in Cities, Countries, Kingdoms, wherein most of the Evils that befall Men, arise from Mens proud Self-Conceit and Arrogance, and those Lusts and Passions that grow therefrom, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2. And there is no Sin almost, but may be laid to the Charge of it; so that 'tis the Mother, or the Nurse of all. For when once a Man comes to be blown up with this Humour of adoring himself; farewell all Reverence or Respect to God or Man, any farther than it serveth his Pride and Haughtiness. This is the Cause of Injustice and Injuriousness to others, and many times of Lying and Perjury, of Anger, Fury, Quarrels, Wars, Back-bitings, Slanders, Detractions, &c. *Jam.* 4. 1.

And there is this Evil farther in it, That it evacuates all Remedies, and makes Vice incurable in Men. For if God deals with a proud Man in a Way of Mercy and Kindness, to oblige and lead him to Repentance; this is apt to be abused by him,

him, to bolster him up farther in a good Opinion of himself, and to harden him in an evil Way, *Exod.* 8. 15, 32. *Hof.* 12. 8. *Job* 21. 7, to 14. And if it pleaseth Almighty God to exercise him with sharp Corrections for the same good End, instead of reflecting upon his Sin as the meritorious Cause thereof, his Heart frets against God, and he spends his Time in discontented Complaints, or Murmurings, *Mal.* 3. 13, 14, 15. And if Men take upon them to reprove him, he will rather, like the Dog, turn again and bite you, than digest such Reproofs, 1 *King.* 22. 8, 27. 2 *Chron.* 16. 7, 10. *Mat.* 14. 3, 4. And if you deal mildly with him by gentle Exhortations or kind Admonitions, or artificially insinuate his Faults to him that they may come to his Observation, he either over-looks all, and thinks himself not concern'd, or throws it off with Indignation likewise, looking upon every such Insinuation as an Affront or Disgrace to him, *Prov.* 15. 12. and 9. 7, 8, 9. So that a proud Man is in a desperate Condition, almost past Cure; so that unless he be brought low by some long or tedious Affliction, hardly any Word or Counsel is like to work upon him. And therefore this is God's usual Method of dealing with such proud and stubborn People, that he intends Mercy to, as he dealt with *Manasses* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, &c. *Psal.* 107. 6. *Hof.* 5. 15.

But Pride is also a very foolish Thing and deserveth to be hooted out of the World: 'Tis only Mens Goodness and Holiness that renders Men valuable or acceptable in the Eyes of God, and not Mens high Birth or Greatness here, or gay Cloaths, or rich Apparel, or any other Accomplishments whatsoever, *Psal.* 4. 3. *Isa.* 66. 2. *Prov.* 12. 26. and 11. 4. and 8. 10, 11. *Job* 28. 15. *Prov.* 16. 32. *Ecc.* 7. 8. *Mat.* 3. 9. And it is not he that commendeth himself, is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth,

2 *Cor.* 10. 18. 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. It is Vertue and Goodness that exceeds all other Things besides; all the good Things of the World are meerly outward, and therefore can add no real Worth or Value to any Man, which nothing can do but that which beautifieth him, and renders him excellent within, that refineth his Temper, and perfects his Nature, *Psal.* 45. 13. The worst of Men, the greatest Tyrants, the Pests and Enemies of Mankind, may also have as much worldly Wisdom and natural Strength or Courage, and many other Accomplishments, who yet are the Scorn and Hate of all round about them. If Men live after the Flesh, and mind the Things of the Flesh, they have lost the Nobility of their Nature; there is nothing wherein we can exceed Brutes or Devils, or the worst of Men, but Virtue and Goodness.

And whatsoever Men have of any Good, be it one or other, it is all originally from God, or by his Dispose and Government over-ruling all Events. However Men may ascribe their Wealth to this or that, as second Causes, it would be a great Wickedness not to acknowledge God's supream Disposal of all, *Jer.* 5. 24. *Hos.* 2. 8. *Prov.* 10. 22. *Psal.* 127. 1. *Eccl.* 9. 11. And so for Honours as well as Riches. 1 *Sam.* 2. 7, 8. *Psal.* 75. 5, 6, 7. 1 *Chr.* 29. 10, 11. *Gen.* 39. 2, &c. *Dan.* 5. 18, 19. *Dan.* 2. 20. Learning and Endowments of Mind brought about by favourable Providences, directing Mens Education and Study, *Eccl.* 2. 26. *Prov.* 2. 6. and 20. 12. *Psal.* 94. 10. *Job* 35. 10, 11. And this is much more to be said of Grace and Holiness, which requireth singular Aids and Helps for its Production, *Jam.* 1. 18. 1 *Pet.* 1. 22, 23. *Eph.* 2. 1, &c. *Tit.* 3. 3, 4, 5. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Gal.* 2. 20. *Eph.* 3. 20, 21. 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. And what hath Man then to be proud of, when all he hath is from Another?

And

And whatsoever we have, if we would consider our Defects withal, we should find that Humility did infinitely more become us than Pride. If we would but consider what little, depending and indigent Creatures we are, that have indeed immortal Souls, but Bodies frail and perishing, and that stand in continual Need almost of every Creature about us, and that we have at best but little and scanty Minds, that we have more Folly than Wisdom, more Ignorance than Knowledge, more Weakness than Strength, more Sin commonly than Grace; that we are subject to innumerable Errors, wrong Apprehensions, foolish Reasonings, and have also stubborn Wills, backward to Good, and apt to cleave unto Evil, and have irregular Lusts, strong and eager Passions, Hearts a Fountain of evil Thoughts, Tongues prone to evil Speaking, our Members to evil Actions, and our whole Lives full of Sin and Folly: Are we not goodly Creatures to be so exalted, we know not why nor wherefore?

As for the Opinion and Esteem of Men, if a Man hath it, he may be thereby rendred more serviceable in his Place, and 'tis easie and comfortable to a Man's own Mind, to have his Person and Performances acceptable: And so far it ought to be valued. But this goeth but a very little way towards a Man's Happiness: For the Praise or Dispraise of Men makes no Man better or worse in himself. It doth not add to his Virtue, if he be commended or admired, and if he hath a good Conscience within, anothers Dis-esteem of him doth not take away from his Excellency. But if any one hunts after Praise or Preferment, by doing of Evil, or by wicked Compliances, he thereby makes himself worse, and so much the more deserveth to lose what he seeks.

But the Opinion of Men, be it what it will, is of very little Account as to one's main Interest; and therefore is far from deserving to be sought as the chief Thing, or with the loss of his Virtue, or that which is better: It will all be forgotten in a little Time, and there will be no more a Remembrance of any thing that is done under the Sun, *Ecl.* 9. 5, 6. The Voice or Praise of Men reacheth but a very little way, it doth not come into the Grave, or reach to Heaven or Hell; or if it did, it would make no Alteration there: When good Men are happy in Heaven, it is easie to bear the Censures of those upon Earth. And if the Damn'd in Hell should hear others commend them, they would be but as they were, miserable and wretched still. And 'tis not Man's Commendation or Discommendation can help or prejudice another, as to their future State: For they that commend or discommend us now, will not be our Judges, but the Judgment is the Lord's; and therefore the great Thing is so to walk, as that we may recommend ourselves to his Favour, and may have Peace of Conscience from a Sense of well-doing, and so to stand one's Ground in a good way, let all the World laugh or frown. It is not worth the while to violate Conscience, or to break one's Peace with God, or to commit Sin, to get any one's Favour whatsoever, or to gain the whole World by it, *1 Cor.* 4. 3. *1 Pet.* 4. 2. *1 Thes.* 2. 4, 5, 6.

Neither is it worth the while to be over-anxious at any time about the Esteem of Men, it is such an uncertain thing; they love to Day, and another Day they slight or hate; their Judgment and Notions change with every Accident, and so do their Affections and Censures: A small Mistake, a little Story, or Cross, or Frown of Providence, or different

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rent Interests make Men cry'd down as much as before they were extoll'd and cry'd uy, *Eccl.* 1. 5, 6. *Acts* 14. 11, &c. and 28. 4, 5, 6. Mens Humours and Opinions are so very various and diverse, their Fancies and Fashions different, as they have been moulded by Education, Custom, Interest, &c. that it is impossible at never so great Expence, for any one to recommend himself to all; and Mens Thoughts are so very secret and deep, that many times it is hard to judge whether there is any Truth or Reality in much of what they say; and whether the outward Signs agree with the Heart or no: Therefore the best way is to labour so to live, as to deserve a good Esteem among Men, and to lay a Foundation for it in Virtue and doing Good, not by Arrogance or vain Shews only, or outward Trappings, or servile Flatteries, or doing Wrongs to others, relinquishing a Duty, or committing any Sin; and to endeavour not to deserve any ill Report by doing any ill Thing, and then let the Matter fall how it will. He that hunts after Applause, or seeks Admiration in any evil way, betrayeth both the Folly and Weakness of his Judgment, and Wickedness of his Heart, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12. *Luke* 6. 26. Let us do our Duty, keep Conscience clear, and stick to God and his Cause, and the Cause of Virtue and Religion, and leave the rest to him, *1 Cor.* 4. 10. *2 Cor.* 6. 4, 8.

Q. What is the Third Enemy, you art to renounce?

A. The sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

Q. What mean you by the Sinful Lusts of the Flesh, that are to be renounced by us?

A. By the Flesh, here seems to be understood that Part or Principle in Man which is the Seat of the animal or sensual Passions; which should be under the conduct and government of Reason, or an enlightened

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ned Mind ; and is so, when the Soul of Man is in a sound and healthful State, but in this State of Corruption is apt to rebel and to shake off the Yoke of Reason and blindly to pursue its own Cravings, and lusts after whatsoever seems agreeable to it, without any Order or Measure. And this being a natural Principle, rooted and settled in Man, as a Creature compounded of Body and Soul, by God the Author of Nature himself, it is not the meer natural motions thereof, after that which is agreeable to it, that is condemned here ; these being unavoidable, and necessarily adherent to Nature itself, and were so in Innocency ; and therefore not to be utterly subdued or extinguish'd by us.

But it is to be understood of those motions of the sensitive Appetite, which are inordinate or irregular ; as they certainly are, when they are carry'd towards wrong or forbidden Objects, and stay long upon them ; or when they are excessive, towards those Pleasures or Things that are lawful and allowed to us, beyond the just ends and limits that are prescribed by Nature and Reason ; as when Men surfeit upon them, or are hindred or indispos'd thereby to the performance of the Duties of their Places, or the Offices of Religion ; or when they bring any detriment to Body or Soul, or lead to the Commission of any other Sins.

And however it may be disputed, Whether the very first motions thereof towards forbidden Objects are sinful, or whether they be wholly under the Government and Command of Reason or no ; yet if they arise rather from habit and custom, or from want of former Government and Restraint, so that they become turbulent and frequent, or are stirr'd up upon every slight occasion, they can by no means be excused : For such turbulent and frequent desires arising from the neglect of the Mind, through Laziness

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ziness or precontracted Prejudice, are voluntary in their Cause, and therefore justly imputable to us. For we find by Experience, that by diligent Study and Labour, and due watchfulness over ourselves, that there may be a very great bridle put even upon the first motions of the natural Appetite, and that may either divert or turn it another way, or by frequent Restraints reduce it into Order. And therefore we see a Temperate Man, that hath kept a command over his Lusts, and not suffer'd them to break loose and run at random as others have done, is not so easily tempted by the baits of Sensuality, nor doth he find in himself such impetuous and violent Strivings of Appetite or Desire, as others do. And the very same Man is not so easily moved by the Temptations that are offered, or teased with these Desires, when he hath been imploy'd in some good Exercise, as Prayer, and Fasting, and Holy Meditation, as at another time he hath been when he hath not kept so strict a Government over himself. And if Faith were strong, and the Mind's assent to the great Truths of the Gospel were deep and solid, and the Will modify'd into a Divine Temper by the impression thereof, this would be a counterpoise to the weight of natural Inclination.

It behoveth us therefore to make it our Business, to engage in this Fight against all the inordinate Motions and Passions of the Flesh. We may have assistance to enable us to overcome them in a great measure, if we will but sincerely use the Means; our gracious God, who knoweth our Frame, having provided us suitable Helps for it. It is our part therefore to resolve and watch against them, and to endeavour by all good Means to prevent their rising; and presently to resist and suppress them, as soon as any irregular or inordinate Inclination is
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discovered ; and to reject or fly from them, or to beat them down with the utmost Hatred and Abhorrence ; that as much as may be, we may prevent all future tendencies thereunto, which in Scripture is called our *Mortification* of them. And for the doing of which, there is a great charge laid upon us, *Col. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 13. Gal. 5. 16, 17, 18, 19. Luke. 21. 34.*

Q. But why must these be renounced by us ?

A. Because all these sinful Lusts and inordinate Passions after carnal Pleasures are most unreasonable in themselves : For tho' such hath been the Bounty and Kindness of our Great and All-wise Creator, that he hath annex'd certain Pleasures, to those Acts that are necessary for the Preservation of our Nature and Kind, and hath in such a manner order'd the Faculties and suited the Objects, that the Actions about them may carry a certain Delight in them, which else would be a meer Burden and Slavery, and tiresome and tedious Thing ; for which his great Goodness is to be acknowledg'd by us ; and Men may think that whilst they pursue those Pleasures to the utmost Stretch of their Inclinations and Appetites, that they do but follow Nature, and therefore may be excused therein ; yet whatever Mens Thoughts are, all Inordinacy and Excess therein is really against Nature in its primitive Constitution and Design, as going beyond the Boundary that God hath set, and the true Reason of Things.

For tho' God hath implanted such pleasurable Sensations and Inclinations in us, for certain wise Ends, and hath indulged us in the Use thereof ; yet he hath also directed us how far we must go : And to this End he hath indued Man with a Rational Soul, with Understanding and Will, to take notice of, and to moderate the sensitive or natural Desire
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in its Motions, and to govern its Actings, and to restrain its Exorbitancies, by the Law of Reason and Conscience, which he hath likewise implanted in Men, and hath fully declared in the holy Scriptures, to shew us what his Will is, that we may not exceed the due Bounds; and this is made to be the Matter of our Exercise here in this State of Probation, which we have just Reason to be contented with, in order to our higher Exaltation, and to our receiving a greater Reward hereafter. But we must not think to excuse ourselves, or that God will excuse us if we live below ourselves, and the true Design of our own Beings, as to live in the inordinate Pursuit of carnal Pleasures, is certainly to do. For that is not to live the Life of a Man, but a Brute, that hath no other Principle for its Guide, nor any other End to pursue, being nothing else but Flesh acted by the meer Spirit of Nature, without a Principle of Reason within to direct it to steer its Course to any higher End. But Man is otherwise made and endued with a reasonable Spirit and Powers for higher Ends, in the Performance of reasonable Duties, in order to a glorious Happiness: And to descend to the meer Life and Passions of Brutes, in the Pursuit of nothing but carnal and sensual Pleasures, is to degrade himself and to stoop below the Design of his Creation, in the doing of which it may well provoke Almighty God to leave him and to revenge it upon him.

Nor will it at all excuse him to say, That these Desires or Inclinations are natural, and so are directed from God himself; and therefore that there is no Reason to debar him therein; for tho' the natural Inclinations in the just Measures and Prosecutions are of God, yet the Excesses and Inordinacies thereof are not so, but are the Effect of Man's Fall, and of his eating the forbidden Fruit, and of the Poyson

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son that is convey'd into his Nature thereby, which God is no way to have imputed to him, who made Man's Nature in a most harmonious Frame at the first, and hath taken that Pity upon Man still, to provide him Helps for his Recovery; and if he will yet brutifie himself, he deserveth to be forsaken of God, and that he should take no more Pity on him, *Jam. 1. 13, 14.*

But that which aggravates these sinful Lusts, and this inordinate Flesh-pleasing, is, That all this furious Pursuit of those carnal Pleasures is of that Nature, that it leaves not the least Mark or Footstep of any real or lasting Advantage behind it, *Rom. 6. 21.* But instead of that, it doth a great deal of Harm, as all Sin doth use to do one way or other, but this more than most others, and perhaps than any. It doth greatly cloud and enthrall the Mind, corrupt the Judgment, spoil the good Temper of the Soul, makes the Spirit sensual and unfit for the greatest Acts and Enjoyments, and hardens and stupifies the Conscience above all other Things, *Hos. 4. 11.* and hereby God is robbed of much of his Service in the Exercise of Divine Love, Faith, Prayer, Praise, and all spiritual Devotion, *Eph. 4. 18, 19.* And thus it doth most of all alienate God from Men, and drive his holy Spirit from them, as being most contrary to that Purity of Heart, which is necessary to fit them to be the Temples of the Holy Ghost, *Rev. 22. 11. Psal. 51. 11.* It unfits Men for Acts of Compassion and Charity towards their suffering Brethren, because being intoxicated with these Pleasures, they can have no Sympathy with them therein, *Amos 6. 3, 4.* It layeth a Foundation for all Evil in the Life, being a perpetual Source of Rebellion against God; they that are under the Dominion of these Lusts being at their Call ready for any thing, in order to the
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Satisfaction of their importunate Passions; so that Sensuality or inordinate Flesh-pleasing seems to be the Master-Sin that leads on all besides. All the inordinate Appetite of Wealth and Riches, of Honours and Greatness, is often only for this, to pander for Mens carnal Lusts, which command the Heart, the Hand, the Tongue, the Pen, and the Labour both of Body and Soul, in hopes of being in better Circumstances to satisfy and please the Flesh afterwards. This is the greatest Idol in the World, the most generally worshipp'd, and the most dangerous: And not only the Time and Wealth, and Honours, and Strength, and Friends are sacrificed to it, but the precious Soul itself, the great and blessed God and Christ, and Heaven, and eternal Felicity are offered up to this sensual Idol. For God himself and his Service is commonly despised, Christ is rejected, the Gospel is trampled upon; the holy Commandments of God cast behind Mens Backs for it; this makes Men neglect Prayer, break the Sabbaths, part with any thing, do any thing, or undergo any thing, to please and satisfy the Flesh. Never was there any *Indian* or *Heathen* Idol, that did so enslave or tyrannize over its Votaries, as the Flesh doth over carnal Sensualists: It makes Men often forget all Bonds of Duty, not only to God, and others about them, but to themselves too; it makes all truckle to it, and it abuseth the greatest and the best Things, to serve its Interest, as we may see in *David* under his Temptation, *Solomon*, *Herod*, and others; this is the grand Enemy and Deceiver: And if we get the Victory over this, there will be less Difficulty in all the rest, *Prov.* 2. 19.

This inordinate Flesh-pleasing doth commonly destroy or impair the Health and Vigor of the Body itself; and till the Conscience becomes quite brawny with long Labour in Sin, it fills the Mind
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with a secret Shame, and with a silent Regret and Confusion ; all which terrible Mischiefs and a great many more would be avoided by sweet Temperance, Mortification, and Restraint, which makes a Triumph and Ovation in the Spirit, and gives the Mind a perpetual Calm and Easiness.

Besides, inordinate Flesh-pleasing, and satisfying carnal Lusts, is a perfect Contradiction to the Gospel which we make Profession of, and to the bright Examples that are left us by our blessed Saviour, and by his Apostles and Followers, whose Course was high and noble, spiritual and pure, and the Rules of Life that they give, of a most exalted Nature, in direct Opposition hereunto, *Mat. 5. 27, 28, &c. 1 Thes. 4. 2, 3. Rom. 13. 12, 13, 14. Eph. 5. 3, 4, 11. 2 Cor. 7. 1.* And the vain Conversation, the wanton Carriages, the Lusts and Debaucheries, the sensual Voluptuous Lives of those that called themselves the Followers of Christ were an extreme Affliction to them, *Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19, 20. Phil. 3. 3, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 19, 20, &c. Jude 12, 13, 19.* And the Danger of this Course is such, that it does quite unfit Men for, and will surely debar Men of Heaven, and those pure and refined Joys there, and will expose those that continue herein, and that are under the prevailing Power of these Lusts to the Curse and Vengeance of the most High God for ever, *Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8, 12, 13. Gal. 5. 19, 21. Eph. 5. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.*

And no Man ought to think God too severe in this Matter ; for from the Nature of the Thing it will be so, that a sensually minded Man cannot be happy in Heaven, whatever other Qualifications he may seem to have : Nor ought any one to think he is safe, because he is not guilty of the same Excesses with many others. It is not only he that is sick with Surfeits and Drunkenness, or that makes an open and com-

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mon Practice of Lewdness and Debauchery, that is in Danger of eternal Death. But if a Man doth but so far make a sensual Course his End and Practice, that it prevaieth over the Love of God and the Care of Religion, that it taints his Spirit, and devours his Time, and spoils all the Relish of divine Things in him, this will be enough to denominate him a carnal Sensualist, and he shall inherit the Fruit of his own Ways and Folly, *Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8.*

Q. What Method or Course may be taken for the Mortification of these sinful Lusts?

A. By a serious Consideration of the utter Unreasonableness, and the great Sin and Mischief thereof, as hath been before represented, till the Heart comes to be affected therewith; and by frequently and diligently repeating and inculcating upon our Minds the other great Truths of Religion; all God's rightful Authority over us, by whom these Excesses and Inordinacies are forbidden to us; the Purity and Holiness of his Nature to which these sinful Lusts are a direct Contradiction; his Love to us in Christ, with the End of our Saviour's coming, and of his suffering and dying for us, to demonstrate to us the unspeakable Evil of Sin, and to engage us to a Renunciation thereof, the Vanity of this World, and of all inordinate Flesh-pleasing, which hath so little Advantage in it, and leaves no Comfort behind, but Regret and Shame; and to look forward to Death and the Grave, where we must shortly lie, and to consider what are all the greatest Masters of all the Arts of Pleasure the better for all their Injoyments, now their Bodies are turn'd to Earth and Rottenness? Or what Good do they now reap by their Revelling and Wantonness, and all their Days and Nights spent therein? And then to consider the Certainty and Strictness

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of the future Judgment, when we shall be call'd to an Account for all that we have done in the Body, and the miserable Reflections that will then arise if we have so little consider'd the true End of our Beings, that we have lived only in the Pursuit of meer bodily Pleasures or Satisfactions, and that this hath been the main End for which we have employed our Time and Talents: For we cannot think that that could be a Design worthy of our great Creator, to make Man only to eat and drink, to give him a wise and rational Soul, to spend his Days in Sport, and Lust, and Revelling: No, but let us consider farther, that this Life here is but our Probation for a great and better State, that there is an higher Happiness that we are to pursue: Here is the Field for us to fight in, and if we come off well, we shall have a Crown of everlasting Glory put upon our Heads, *Rev. 3. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 8.* Here we are to sow our Seed, and according as the Seed is which we sow, such shall be the Crop which we shall reap, *Gal. 6. 8.*

To mortifie therefore these earthly Affections, and to subdue and bring under all the Lusts of the Body, we should consider of the far surpassing Joys and Pleasures of Heaven, in our being made perfect there in the Vision and Fruition of the ever blessed God, and of the glorious Splendour of the heavenly State; in comparison of which, all this glimmering of sensual Satisfaction here would disappear as the Light of the Glow-Worm before the Sun. And on the other side, consider that Darkness and Horror of the hellish State, to which all inordinate Flesh-Pleasers shall be consigned at last, for the brutish Abuse of all their noble Faculties, contrary to the true End of their Beings; they having brought upon themselves such a Degeneracy thereby, that tho' they have immortal Souls, they are fit for nothing
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else, they having evacuated all the noble Remedies of the Gospel to refine and purifie them, to fit them for better Enjoyments.

But to all this also must be added or premised, sometimes Fasting and Abstinence, and beating down the Body, to tame these masterless Affections which else will so domineer and enslave the Mind that none of those wise Thoughts can be admitted, which are so necessary for purifying the Souls of Men, *1 Cor.* 9. 27. and there must necessarily also be a Forbearance of those Words and Acts, and a flying from those Objects and Occasions that are apt to renew and rouse up in us those Images and Fancies upon which the Passions are founded, *Prov.* 5. 8. and 23. 31. and we must perpetually watch against, and be sure to resist the first Risings of evil Imaginations, and the very first Beginnings of those secret Flames, that if let alone, presently get Strength, and are much more hard to be extinguish'd; and for this, the Spirit should be kept continually in a wakeful Frame, which, tho' it require Pains, yet the Infirmary of our State doth necessarily call for, for the preserving our Innocency.

And now after all, considering our great Weakness, and the Danger we are in by reason of these inbred Enemies, maintain'd and assisted with all the external Auxiliaries of outward Objects that are here presented to us, we must necessarily have Recourse to God by continual Prayer, for his victorious Grace to prevent and assist, and to enable us to overcome; and must ever depend upon the Aids and Assistances of his holy Spirit to that End. This must be first, and middle, and last, to make all the rest effectual, *1 Thes.* 5. 17. *Col.* 4. 2.

Q. What is the Second Thing you are oblig'd to in your Baptism?

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A. To

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A. To believe all the Articles of my Christian Faith, which are Propositions that contain in them Truths of that high and elevated Nature, that they tend to enrich the Mind with noble and gallant Principles to found both our Practice, and Hope, and Comfort upon; and to which therefore we ought to give a most firm and steady Assent in which the Nature of our Christian Faith or Belief doth consist, and not content ourselves to receive them only as Matters of meer Speculation, or for Discourse sake: To have a right and steady Belief of these divine Doctrines, and to have right Notions of Things, being of the highest Consequence to engage a Man to the former Renunciation, and to conduct and incline him to all good Practices, the Understanding being the leading Faculty in Man to all the rest; so that when that is rightly inform'd and endued with good and powerful Principles by the Belief of divine Doctrine, the Inordinacies of the other Faculties will be corrected, and they will be inclined to the Pursuit of that which is good. Whereas on the other side, unsound Opinions and false and heretical Doctrines being embrac'd, will have a malevolent Influence to seduce Man into Evil, and to harden him and continue him in it, *Heb. 11. 6, 7, 8, &c. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. Tit. 3. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17, 18. Jo. 8. 24. 2 Cor. 4. 2, 3, 4.*

Q. What is the Third Thing then required of you in your Baptism, and which you are thereby engaged to?

A. To keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the Days of my Life. This being the End and Design of Faith itself, and of all the Articles thereof, to which they are principally directed and intended, and that we thro' Patience and Comfort thereof might have Hope, and not barely to entertain the Mind with meer Notion or Speculation of Things, which is in comparison thereof,

of, but of little Use ; so that *Believing* and *Doing*, or *Faith* and *good Works* together, make up the whole of Christianity, *Mat.* 28. 20. 1 *Jo.* 2. 3, 4. but the former in order to the latter, without which it is not of any great Value, *Tit.* 3. 8. *Eccl.* 12. 13. *Rom.* 2. 6. *Mat.* 25. 31, &c. *Jam.* 2. 14. So that this is the great and concluding Point of all, whereby we are to testifie our owning of God as our Sovereign, and our submitting to his Authority and Government, in Expectation of his continual Blessing, *Deut.* 10. 12. *Jo.* 14. 15. *Eph.* 2. 10. *Act.* 5. 29. *Deut.* 27. 10.

Q. *What is that Obedience that we are engaged by our Baptism to perform ?*

A. Tho' we are to endeavour after the utmost Perfection, *Phil.* 3. 13. and thereby we are to demonstrate the Sincerity of our Respect to God's Commands ; yet it is not an absolutely perfect or sinless Obedience that is now required or expected of us as the Condition of Life ; such an absolute Perfection in this imperfect State being not attainable by us, 1 *Jo.* 1. 10. and 2. 1. 2 *Chron.* 6. 36. *Eccl.* 7. 20. *Rom.* 7. 21. *Phil.* 3. 12. *Gal.* 6. 1. *Psal.* 19. 13. *Jam.* 3. 2. But yet neither will God accept of a meer partial Obedience which is accompanied with a willing or notorious Neglect of any known Duty that we have a Call and Opportunity to the Performance of, or with the Allowance of any known Sin, *Jam.* 2. 10. *Rev.* 2. 4. and *Rev.* 3. 2. *Psal.* 119. 6, 128. *Luke* 1. 6. *Job* 1. 8. neither will he accept of that which proceeds from meer Custom and Education, or is perform'd from a Principle of Vain-Glory, or for Self-Appause, or from an Opinion of Merit, *Mat.* 6. 1, &c. *Gal.* 2. 16. *Luke* 17. 10.

But it must proceed from a sincere Respect to the Will of God in all Things, and from a Principle of

divine Love in the Heart, and from an holy Fear of his Displeasure, if we should neglect or act contrary to the same ; and therefore in respect of our Aim, Desire, and Endeavour, it must be universal with all the Heart, and with regard to all his Commandments, and all to this End, that God may be glorified by us, and we may be fit for Communion with him and the Enjoyment of him, there being not one of all the Commands of God that an upright Man desires to be changed for his sake, or to be made otherwise than it is, he desiring still to have his Heart brought to the Commands, and not the Commands brought to him, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. *Psal.* 119. 6, 128. *Mat.* 22. 37. 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. *Jer.* 32. 40. 1 *King.* 6. 12. 1 *Chr.* 28. 9. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Mat.* 5. 16. *Col.* 1. 12.

And then also this Obedience must be constant and persevering all the Days of our Lives ; all the Commandments being still the same, and having the same Reason in them ; and therefore always binding us to the regular Performance of our Duty, tho' the same Duty is not always to be perform'd, but in its proper Season according to the Weight thereof ; so that when any two come into Competition, and cannot both be performed together, there may be a Performance of that for the present which must be perform'd then or not at all, when the other can be put off to another time ; or of that which is most necessary for the present Business or Occasion, *Luke* 1. 74, 75. *Rom.* 6. 22. 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *Mat.* 10. 22. 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Heb.* 10. 38, 39. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. *Prov.* 23. 17.

And in order to the producing of this constant and uniform Obedience, it is necessary that a divine Temper and Disposition of Spirit be formed and rooted within, that may abide there and may steadily incline to the Performance of these Acts of Duty to God

God and Man, just as Nature doth to Acts of Nature. For without this it must needs be that all our Acts of Obedience will be variable and uncertain, because they will proceed from a variable and uncertain Principle, as all other Principles are besides this, which is the Image of God in Man, and the very Transcript of the divine Law ; so that all following Acts of Obedience are but like Leaves and Branches unfolded, that are contain'd in this Seed of Grace in the Heart, *Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Jer. 32. 39, 40. Jer. 31. 33.*

Q. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and do as they have promised for thee ?

A. Yes verily : My Consent to the Covenant being declared by them as my Representatives in my Name, and the Promise being made in my stead, and which I myself had been obliged to have made and declared, had I then been myself of Age for it, I am now bound by my Baptism to the Performance thereof on my Part : And I cannot expect the saving Blessings to be conveyed on God's Part, without my doing the same. Forasmuch as the Covenant is mutual ; and as it contains a Stipulation of Mercy from God upon certain Conditions, so there is therefore in it a Restipulation of Duty from us, and thereby an Obligation to it which we must besure to make good, *Act. 18. 30, 31, 32.*

Q. And are you not so make a Profession of your Resolution thus to stand to, and make good your Baptismal Covenant ?

A. Yes, and by God's Help so I will. Forasmuch as I am thereby obliged to be the Lord's for ever ; and as I am bound, so am I therefore willing and ready to confess the same before Men, and to own my Relation to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as his Disciple and Subject, when it may

may be for the promoting of his Glory and the Edification of others, nothing doubting but that as he hath made this my Duty, so he will bear me out in it, and will not fail to reward what he is pleased by his Grace to enable me first to perform, whatever Dangers or Hardships I may be exposed to for my so doing, *Mat. 10. 32. Rom. 10. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 15. Rev. 2. 3, 4.*

Q. And ought you not also to be very thankful to Almighty God for all those his great and inestimable Favours to you?

A. Yes, And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father that He hath called me to this State of Salvation thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour. This I acknowledge that both I and all Christians are exceedingly obliged to, both upon the Account of the Dignity and Excellency of that State that we are called to, it being **A State of Salvation**; that is, a State in which Salvation is offered, and all the Means necessary to Salvation are made known and afforded to us; there being therein held forth to us the Covenant of Grace, and what God is ready on his Part to bestow, and what are the Conditions required on ours, and how they may be performed; and all this ratified to us in our Baptism, wherein we are already invested with very great Privileges, and have a confirm'd Title to more upon the Performance of our part; so that Salvation may be surely attained by us, if we be not culpably wanting to ourselves. And because all this also is brought to pass for us, not upon the Account of any Worthiness or Merit of our own, but of his own meer Grace and Favour, thro' the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into the World to save Sinners, and by whose

whose Name alone we can be saved, 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Eph. 1. 3, &c. Rev. 1. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10. Rom. 1. 16.

Q. And ought you not also to labour ever to continue in this State?

A. Yes, And it is my great Interest, to continue in the same to my Life's End. By a faithful Labour and diligent Striving in the Use of the appointed Means, to do all those Things at all Times, that are required on my part, and to work out my own Salvation *with Fear and Trembling*; lest by receiving the Grace of God in vain, I should after all fail of that which I have before me so fair a Prospect of, 2 Pet. 1. 5, to 11. We must therefore build up ourselves in our *most holy Faith, and Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep ourselves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life, Jude 20, 21.* And we must look unto ourselves that we *lose not those things that we have wrought, but that we receive a full Reward, 2 Jo. 8.* For *no Man having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God, Luke 9. 62.*

And therefore considering the Weakness of our own Minds, and the Strength and Violence of our corrupt and carnal Affections which are apt to top it over Reason itself, and to shake off its Government, and so lead us into Ways of Folly; and considering also the Strength and Power of Temptations, and of those Impressions which such external Objects as are agreeable to the sensitive part, are apt to make upon us, and the Cunning and Subtlety of the Devil withal, I am here directed, besides mine own Labour in the Use of the appointed Means, **to pray unto God to give me his Grace** for that End and Purpose, which I am well assured, upon

upon my faithful asking thereof, and the Use of what I have already received, shall not be wanting to me in such Measures as I have need of it, to enable me to perform what is required so far as may be accepted thro' the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to hold out therein unto the End, *Luke 11. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Rom. 7. 18. 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9. Phil. 4. 12. Mat. 5. 6. Isa. 55. 1. Psal. 145. 18, 19. 1 Thes. 1. 11, 12. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Phil. 1. 6. and 2. 12, 13. Jam. 1. 5. Mat. 13. 12.*

PART

P A R T. II.

The Christian Faith.

S E C T. III.

Of the Creed, particularly what we are to believe concerning God.

Q. **Y**OU have given me an Account of the Covenant both on God's part and yours: But for the more distinct Explication of your part therein, Pray give me an Account more particularly of the two last Things promised in your Name by your Godfathers at your Baptism. And first, Of your Belief, which was the second Thing promised, and is the second Branch, or Part of the Covenant on your part. What is it then that you are to believe?

A. The whole Bible is the Object of a Christian's Faith, 2 Pet. 1. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 4. and is to be received by us as a constant, infallible, and perfect Rule, both of Faith and Manners, Isa. 8. 20. Acts. 20. 32. Jo. 20. 21. Psal. 19. 7. Acts. 26. 22. Jo. 5. 39. And for that End it is clear in all Matters that are necessary to be believed or done by us, Psal. 119. 105. and 19. 7, 8. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Jo. 5. 39. Mat. 22. 29. and therefore it is to be read by all People now, as all People were bound to hear the Apostles and Prophets when they preach'd to them; this being the Record, and herein being contained the Subject Matter of what they preach'd, the same Word and Doctrine being con-

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contain'd in these Writings which were heretofore deliver'd by them by Word of Mouth; so that there can be no more Reason to keep People from reading their Writings, than from hearing their Preaching, there being sufficient Means left for the Understanding of what they write, as far as the same is necessary to be known for our Direction in the Way of Salvation, as there was for the understanding of what they spoke, *Acts* 24. 14. and 17. 2, 11. *Luke* 16. 29. *Col.* 3. 16. *Eph.* 6. 17. *1 Thes.* 5. 27. *2 Pet.* 1. 1.

But yet it is to be observed, that some Truths are of greater Import to us than others the right Belief whereof is the Ground-Work of our Christian Practice and Comfort, and which therefore ought to be more distinctly known and believed by us; such are those which are called *the Articles of our Christian Faith*, which are collected into that short Summary of the *Apostles Creed*; so call'd, either because it is a Summary of the Apostles Doctrine, or because it was compos'd in, or near the Apostles Times, either by them or by other Apostolical Men, at least as to the main or greatest Part of it. Such a brief Form of sound Words being of excellent Use to the very meanest Capacities, and a Guide to instruct us what those Promises are, which are most necessary, and which therefore ought most carefully to be minded by us, *2 Tim.* 1. 13.

Q. What Reason have we to believe the Scriptures to be a Word or Revelation come from God?

A. The Belief of the Scriptures being of divine Inspiration, is founded upon the Credibility of the Facts which are recorded in the History thereof, and the divine Character of that Doctrine that is contained therein, considered both together. The Facts which are there recorded, are of that extraordinary Nature, and so much above the Power

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of natural Causes, that they are evident Arguments of the Power of God concurring in a miraculous manner with those that wrought them ; and they being produced by them on purpose for the Confirmation of the Doctrine that was preach'd by them, are evident Proofs of their divine Mission, and that the Doctrine which they deliver'd was from God : It being not to be imagin'd that God should justify them and their Doctrine in this extraordinary manner, if they were not commission'd by him so to preach, and their Doctrine was not divine. And hence our Saviour doth so often appeal to those Works that were wrought by him for Proof thereof ; and many of those that saw them declared themselves well satisfied that it was and must be so, *Jo.* 14. 10. and 5. 36. and 15. 24. and 3. 2. *Heb.* 2. 3, 4.

And that those Facts were so, as they are reported to us, we have the credible Relation of those that were Eye-Witnesses of the same, or had a full and perfect Account thereof from those that were so, and therefore could not be deceived therein, and who do also approve themselves in the Relation of these Facts to be faithful and impartial Historians, Lovers of Truth, and Haters of Falshood, delivering all Things plainly and naturally with the greatest Simplicity, without any Disguise, or rhetorical Amplifications ; without going about to make an Hero of their Master, or of any of his Followers, as the manner of prophane Writers useth to be, without concealing any of his or their outward Meanness, or his innocent Infirmities, or Fears, or Agonies, or their Faults or Follies, as meer worldly wise Men, or Self-seekers, or Advancers of a Party or a Faction would have been likely to have done ; or if the Notoriety of the Things had forc'd them to such a Confession, they would

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would have disguised the same, or would have apologized for them; whereas these make no Excuses for any thing; and these Facts they set out usually with all their Circumstances of Time and Place, and as done before Multitudes; and oftentimes they mention the Persons Names that are concern'd therein, and publish'd their Relation hereof soon after the Facts were done, in or near the Country where they were done, and exposed it to the View of all, to be examin'd or contradicted if any Fault or Untruth could be found therein, and that at a Time when all of this Profession lay under the severest Persecution and Reproach that the malicious Hearts and Hands, and Tongues of Men could inflict upon them, when they could have no Prospect of reaping any Advantage thereby: And together with their Relation of these Facts, there is mix'd and set out by them such Discourse as sheweth a plain and unaffected Piety, both in the Speakers and Relaters; and that they were really endued with a most eminent Spirit of Religion and Zeal for God, and Charity to Men. By all which they approve themselves to be sincere and upright Men that had no Mind to impose upon the World, or to set out Fictions instead of Truth, but that deserve the highest Credit to be given to what they say.

And then moreover it appears, that the Doctrine itself which was preach'd by our Saviour and his Apostles, and is contain'd in these Books, is in many Respects of that high and elevated Nature, that it is above the View and Invention of uninspired Men, and such as the greatest Philosophers never stumbled upon, without any Mixture of humane Folly or Frailty which their Writings are all, more or less, tainted with. The *Commandments* and Rules of Life are for the curbing of our fleshly Appetites, for the raising our Natures to a
divine

divine Pitch, are pure and spiritual, reaching to the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, and truly tending to make good Men, good Neighbours, good Parents, good Patriots, and sincere Worshipers of God, without the least Superstition, or any thing that is in the least impure or unbecoming, and in all that concerns Men shewing much Compassion and Consideration of humane Weakness, yet without any Indulgence to any Passion on the one side, or Flattering on the other. The Promises are high and lofty, but giving no Encouragement to hope for great Things from this World, which are so much affected by Men. The Threatning's terrible, but respecting another Life for the main: So that neither Promises nor Threatnings were like to be of any great Force, without good Evidence of their being divine. Thus all this Doctrine and Religion is every way worthy of God, and answers all that any Religion can be suggested to do, and above whatever any other Religion ever did.

And accordingly it was received and believed in the World, and had a mighty Power therein for the commanding and reforming thereof; and that tho' it was preach'd at first by mean Instruments, and for the most part illiterate Men that had neither Eloquence to recommend, Power to force, or Riches to bribe their Followers. And tho' they that preach'd, and their Followers also were persecuted and tormented to the utmost degree, and suffered many cruel Deaths, yet their Doctrine was spread and flew thro' the World, and captivated all Nations to it, under all these discouraging Circumstances, as if it had had all the greatest Advantages possible attending upon it. And what could all this be ascribed unto, but to the meer Truth and Evidence thereof, and to the mighty Power

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Power of God concurring therewith? From all which, and a great deal more, we may see abundant Reason to justify the Wisdom and Prudence, and Reasonableness of the Christian Belief at this Day, there being as much to be produc'd for it as could be expected, and more than any other Institution that was ever embrac'd by Men, could pretend or lay Claim to, &c.

Q. Now **Rehearse the Articles of your Belief** contained in the Creed.

A. **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, &c.**

Q. *Why are these Truths especially called the Articles of our Belief?*

A. Because they are above all others, the most necessary Points of Christian Doctrine, and of the greatest Use and Importance to us, when they are consider'd in their due Extent to purify our Minds and to the engaging us to the doing of our Duty, and to support us under our Fears, to comfort us in our Troubles, to please and delight us, and to unite our Hearts to God; every Truth here being a Motive of divine Love! So that when these are thoroughly understood, and believingly entertain'd, they will lay a Foundation for divine Love, and for a ready and universal Obedience.

Q. *How must these Truths or Articles be believed by us?*

A. We must give a firm and steady Assent thereunto, so that we may be firmly and thoroughly persuaded of their undoubted Truth, that our Faith or Belief thereof may be operative and practical, such as was the Faith of *Abraham* and of all the Saints, *Heb. 6. 11.* So that we may be influenced by the Belief thereof, to the Practice of the several Virtues and good Works, and to an intire Dedication of

of ourselves to God's holy Service, *Jam.* 2. 14; 17. *Tit.* 3. 8, 9. *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. And yet when we have done all, it must engage us from a Sense of our own Weakness and Unworthiness to betake ourselves to the Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, to intercede for us with the Father, for his gracious Pardon and Acceptance of us; so that there may be no place left for glorying in ourselves or any Creature for the Attainment of true Happiness, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 25.

Q. What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?

A. First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the World.

Secondly, In God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all Mankind.

Thirdly, In God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect People of God.

To which is added our Belief of the Holy Catholick Church, with the Privileges that belong to the true and sincere Members thereof.

Q. What do you observe in general, in the three first Parts of the Creed, concerning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

A. 1. We have here Three Persons in the Godhead plainly distinguish'd, as they also are, *Mat.* 3. 16, 17. where we have an Account of the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon Christ; and of the Voice of the Father from Heaven; saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* And so in the Form of Baptism, *Mat.* 28. 19. which is ordered to be, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. As the

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Masters of our Religion and Co-workers of our Salvation, to whose Service we are therein dedicated by an Equality of Obligation. And 1 *Jo.* 5. 7. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these Three are One.* And 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.*

2. Yet there is in them a Unity of Essence, or Sameness of Nature. These three Persons being joined together in an Equality of Predication, to have the same Worship and Service done to them, in those Texts, *Mat.* 28. 19. 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. and 1 *Jo.* 5. 7. These *Three* are said to be *One*, all which implyeth, that they are of *one Substance, Power, and Eternity, Majesty and Glory* ; and consequently that they are all *Three* equally God, in respect of the same glorious Essence and Attributes ; so that the *Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God* ; and yet they are all but *one God* ; for God is *One*, and there is *none other God but One*, 1 *Cor.* 8. 4. *Dent.* 4. 35. So that these *Three* Persons being all God, equal in Power and Glory, yet are not three separate Deities, but in intimate and perfect Union one with another, and so but *One God* : Tho' in respect of Order, the Father is *first*, and so most properly Self-Originant and the Fountain of the sacred Trinity, who by an eternal and mysterious Generation, unconceivable to us, begat this his only uncreated Son of the same Nature with Himself, who is therefore the *second* Person in Order, having received his divine Nature from the Father, of the same Substance with him, and as touching his God-head equal to him, *Joh.* 10. 30. and 5. 13, 26. *Phil.* 2. 6. *Isa.* 53. 3. and the Holy Ghost or Spirit is the *third*, who by an eternal and unspeakable Emanation, or Communication of the Divine Nature, proceedeth equally from both the Father and the

the Son, *Joh. 15. 26. Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 3. 9. Joh. 16. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Heb. 9. 14.*

3. There is a difference of Offices, or Operations from without: The Father creates, as being the first Cause and Original of all Things, *1 Cor. 8. 6.* but by and thro' the Son and Holy Spirit; to whom therefore the Work of Creation is also sometimes ascribed as to the Son, *Col. 1. 16. Eph. 3. 9. Heb. 1. 2.* and to the Holy Ghost, *Gen. 1. 2. Joh. 26. 13. Psal. 33. 6. and 104. 30.* Then the Son redeemeth, but as appointed and sent by the Father, *1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. Heb. 9. 12. Gal. 4. 4. 1 Joh. 4. 9.* And the Holy Ghost sanctifyeth as the Spirit of the Father and the Son, *1 Jo. 16. 13, 14. 2 Thes. 2. 13.* So that tho' these Operations are more especially appropriated to each Person; yet it is not so, as to exclude the Concurrence of the other some way to the same Operation, they acting all together therein some way or other, but in a certain Order; they being in perfect Union together, as to Nature and Essence, so also as to Counsel, Will, and Action.

4. Here we may observe the Extent of these Operations. The *Father's Work of Creation* extends to all the World, there being no Self-Existent, or Independent Being, but God, who is Being and Life itself, and all other Things from him, and depending upon him, *Isa. 44. 6. Neh. 9. 6. Heb. 3. 4. Rev. 4. 11. Acts 17. 24. Heb. 11. 3. Psal. 104. 24.* The *Son's Work of Redemption* extends to all Mankind, which is not so to be understood, that all Mankind are actually redeemed by him from Sin and Death, and Wrath, *Eph. 2. 2, 12.* but that the Price is paid, and the Ransom is made by him, to procure Pardon and Salvation for all that will come in at the Gospel-Call, and submit themselves, and accept of Mercy upon the Terms proposed, and the Offer thereof is made universally to every Creature, where the

Gospel is promulgated, *Mark* 16. 15. *Job*. 3. 16. *Isa*. 55. 1. *Rev*. 3. 20. *Prov*. 9. 4. *Heb*. 2. 9. 1 *Jo*. 2. 2. *Isa*. 53. 6. *Rom*. 8. 32. 1 *Tim*. 2. 6. *Heb*. 2. 9. 2 *Cor*. 5. 19. *Rom*. 14. 15. 2 *Pet*. 2. 1. and all Mankind have actually some Benefit by him, 1 *Tim*. 4. 10. *The Spirit's Work of Sanctification* extends to the whole visible Church, both in respect of federal Dedication in the Ordinance of Baptism appointed by the Spirit, whereby they are separated from the rest of the World, devoted to God, and so are become Saints and holy; 1 *Cor*. 12. 13. and 7. 14. *Heb*. 10. 29. *Eph*. 5. 26. *Ezek*. 17. 28. 1 *Cor*. 1. 2. and also in respect of real Operation in certain Measures and Degrees; tho' not to all alike, there being some that do partake of higher and more noble Operations and Assistances, than others, tho' he be never wanting to any that use the sanctifying Means appointed by him to that End and Purpose, or till they repel and resist his Motions: And in whomsoever any Degree of Sanctification is found, it is by the Operation of the Spirit, 1 *Cor*. 6. 11. *Eph*. 4. 4, 5. *Acts* 7. 5. 1 *Thes*. 5. 19. -

Q. *What doth the first Branch of the Creed treat of?*

A. *Of God the Father, and his Work of Creation.*

Q. *How doth it appear that there is a God who made Heaven and Earth?*

A. *The invisible Things of God from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that ure made, even his eternal Power and Godhead, Rom. 1. 20. for there must be a Self-existent Being, or else nothing had ever been: For nothing can produce nothing. But we have no Reason at all to suppose the World to have been Self-existent, either in the Whole, or in any of the Parts of it; we know ourselves best, but we know no such Matter of ourselves; for that which is Self-existent must*

must be eternal ; But we know that we are not so, but that we had a Beginning, as all others about us have : Nor have we any thing at all in ourselves, in our Understandings, or Wills or Powers, or Bodies, that is a Sign of its having had an eternal Duration without any Beginning. Nor is there any thing in any Being about us, that giveth us any Intimation or Suspicion of any such thing. We know some of the Properties of Matter, or Body ; as Solidity, Extension, Divisibility, Impenetrability ; and there may be others that we don't know : But there is nothing that giveth us any Suspicion that Eternity is one of them. And as for most of those Beings that are of any Order or Form about us, we see their Rises and Falls, their Increases and Decays ; by which we plainly see they are not eternal, nor of themselves. We have no History of any thing earlier than *Moses*, of any Facts done ; who at the same time that he giveth us a History of those Facts, he gives us an Account also of the Beginning of the World, and how all things came to be. If the World had been eternal, there must have been another Face of Things than there is : The very Rocks in the Sea must have been worn away with the continual beating of the Billows against them ; the Mountains and Hills levelled with the Valleys ; the Rivers filled up, the Earth made a Plain, and the Waters over-topt it : The World must have been by this time over-stock'd with People in an ordinary way, notwithstanding all Abatements made by Plagues, Wars, Deluges, &c.

And where there are innumerable Beings then, which we see did not produce themselves, there must be some Cause of their Production : For being not Self-existent, seeing they are, they must be from another ; which could be no other but that Being which was Self-existent, and without all Cause ;

which is that Being whom we call *God*, who is the Cause of all Things, or else all these Things must happen in time by the meer casual *Junto* or meeting of the little undesigning Parts of Matter, without any Director or Guide of them to such an End, which is past all reasonable Imagination: For when we see any wise Contrivance, we naturally and necessarily conclude there was a wise Contriver of it; and when we see a Motion, that there is some Mover; and where there is a regular and orderly Motion, that there was some Guide or Manager that begun and kept it on.

Thus, when we see a Clock or Watch, we never imagine that the Ballance and Pendulum, and Movements did all come of themselves, or that they put themselves together, into that useful and artful Posture. When we see a Picture, we never imagine that the Colours did meet together of themselves into that curious Order. When we see an House, we never think that the Timber, Brick, and Mortar, and Stones brought themselves as they are; or that the Mortuises and Tenons made themselves, or moved towards one another, or united together by chance: Nor when we see a Book, that the Letters put themselves together, or fell into Words and Sense, without any Guide or Director. But we naturally and reasonably conclude and say, there was an Artift here, and an Artift there; here a *Watch-Maker*, there a *Picture-Drawer*, there a *Builder*, *Author*, or *Compiler*. So much more must we conclude, when we see this great World, and such a vast Variety of useful Creatures therein, wherein there are innumerable Instances of the greatest Art and wisest Counsel, that there is One who is the *Builder and Maker of all*, which is God, *Heb. 3. 4.* and that He is also a most Wise and Powerful Being, and full of all Excellency and Goodness; because

cause there are every where the most evident and apparent Instances of the greatest Power and Wisdom and Goodness, in the Contrivance and Formation of all Things. And thus we find that all Mankind have agreed in this Notion, that there is a God, and that this hath ever past as an incontestable Principle among all ; except some few that have reasoned themselves out of Reason, or must have Reason only to themselves, and all the World besides must have none.

This was the consentient Belief of holy Men in Scripture, That God was the Former of all Things, which is expressed here by his being the Maker of *Heaven and Earth*, under which Terms all Things are contain'd that were ever made, and that all Things were made by his meer Will, and Word of his Power, out of nothing, *Job* 12. 7. *Psal.* 33. 6. *Jer.* 10. 12. and 27. 5. *Psal.* 19. 1. *Col.* 1. 16. *Heb.* 11. 3. *Acts* 14. 15. and 17. 26. and all which must only be for this End to shew forth his Glory and Excellency and Majesty, and to communicate his Goodness in several Ways and Degrees to the Works of his Hands, *Rev.* 4. 11. *Prov.* 16. 4. *Rom.* 11. 36.

Q. *What will follow from hence, that there is a God?*

A. That Atheism, or Denial of a God, is the most unaccountable Folly and Madnes, *Psal.* 14. 1. because it is impossible, according to the Atheist's Opinion, to give a reasonable Account how the World came to be, or how it continueth in that Order in which it is ; when supposing a God, the Account hereof is very rational and easie: It being most unreasonable Foolishness to desert a plain and reasonable Account of Things, to flee to that which is downright absurd, and which there is nothing to guide a Man's Reason to ; as that is, to suppose

that all Things should be made and put together in this excellent Frame, and usefully adapted to one another, by meer blind and uncontriving Chance.

As also moreover, because it is such a petulant Contradiction to the Reason of all Mankind, and to the consentient Belief of all Ages and of all Nations that have universally agreed in this common Principle: And yet all this the Atheist opposeth, and at the same time contrary to all Reason, asserts a pure Negative, That there is no God; when he cannot but know, that there is no Contradiction in such a Notion, That a Being of all possible Perfection may be possible.

And then in denying of such a Being, and the Affronts and Abuses that naturally follow upon such denial, he wretchedly exposeth himself to his direful Vengeance supposing him to be, and he may be at last, for any thing he knoweth to the contrary. And this he doth, when he gets nothing by it, but is thereby brought more under the Slavery of his own unbridled Lusts, which every wise Man would chuse, and wish to be delivered from: And he propagates a Notion which none can ever be the better for, and goeth to destroy that which is the Foundation of the greatest Comfort and Support to all wise and good Men; to whom the Being of a God, to inspect and provide for them, and to take care of them is the Ground of the highest Consolation. But as this Notion of the Atheist is the greatest Folly and Madness, so it must needs be on the other side, our greatest Wisdom and highest Interest, to acknowledge and adore, to reverence and praise, and serve this mighty Being, to whom we and all the World owe our Beings and Lives, and all we have, that we may by all means engage him to us, to stand by us, and to take our Parts, to be-
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flow upon us all needful Good, and to defend us from all Evil.

Q. What may we learn from that, That He is the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of us, and of all things therein?

A. We may hereby perceive how great and wonderful God is in himself, who gave being to all these Things; and therefore that we should have most high and admiring Thoughts of his transcendent Excellency and Perfection; what an infinite Plenitude and Fulness of Being; what an immense Power and Wisdom, and Goodness he must needs have who wrought all these Things, *Psal.* 104. 24. *Oh! how wonderful are thy Works, Rev.* 15. 3. *Job* 37. 16. and 5. 9. *Psal.* 1. 11. 2. *Job* 36. 26. and 26. 14. And we should look upon all Things else, as very little in comparison of him; so that we may well admire that he doth not disdain to look upon us, or to take any notice of us, *Psal.* 8. 3. *Isa.* 40. 17, 22. And we should fear him for his Greatness, and take heed that we do not provoke him, by the Neglect of our Duty, or by the Commission of any Sin, lest his Anger burn like Fire against us, and there be none to deliver, *Psal.* 33. 8, 9. *Jer.* 5. 22. and 10. 7, 12. And we should praise him for our Beings, and for all the Powers and Capacities that we are endowed with, and for the Use of all his Creatures, seeing we have all from him, *Psal.* 100. 3, 4. *Rev.* 10, 11. *Psal.* 4. 148, 1, &c. and 95. 6. 2 *Chron.* 2. 12. *Psal.* 139. 14. and 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. for he being the Creator, we must own that he also is the Proprietor of all Things, and so that we, and all we have is his, *Psal.* 89. 11. and 95. 5. *Ezech.* 18. 4. *Psal.* 50. 11. and 24. 2. *Job* 41. 11.

And hence it will follow, That he hath a just Right and Title to the Government of all Things, *Acts* 17. 24. *He that made the World, and all things therein,*

therein ; he is Lord of Heaven and Earth. He hath a supreme Dominion and Empire over all ; *the blessed and only Potentate, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, 1 Tim. 6. 15. And being the Sovereign of the World, he hath a Right to dispose of all Things as it shall seem best to him, as may be agreeable to the Condition of Creatures, and the Natures he hath endowed them with, and to his own Perfections, and where he hath not bounded himself by Promises and Covenants. And thus according to this his supreme and sovereign Will, as Lord of all, he hath a Right to share out, and allot to all that Being, and State and Good which he himself shall think most fit. And thus he maketh *one Vessel to Honour, and another to Dishonour*, all being in his Hand as *the Clay is in the Hand of the Potter*, Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 21. To one he gives a stronger Constitution of Body, to another a more infirm : One he makes more beautiful, another less ; and thus to some he gives a greater Capacity and Degree of Understanding than he doth to others : Some he raiseth to greater Estates, and placeth them in more honourable Posts than he doth others : He makes one richer, and another poorer ; gives one Authority to Command, and sets another in Subjection : Thus he doth in the Body politick, as he doth in the natural ; makes one Member an Eye, another an Hand, another a Foot ; one more feeble, another more comely, 1 Cor. 12. 17, 18, 19. So in the Church, he gave one the Gift of Prophecie, another the Gift of Tongues, another the Gift of Healing, &c. 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29. And thus he gives to some better Helps and greater Opportunities of Improvement, and placeth them in better Circumstances for their Education ; and bestoweth greater Degrees of Grace upon some than others. These are all his prerogative Acts which he is not bound to

to give an Account of to any, but disposeth arbitrarily as he pleaseth, tho' never without Reason, tho' perhaps to us unknown, *according to the Counsel of his own Will*, Eph. 1. 11. Tho' in other Things, wherein he hath bound himself by Promises or Compacts, he always acts accordingly, and not by way of arbitrary Dispensation alone; as he hath bound himself *to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. *To give Wisdom liberally*, Jam. 1. 5. and give more *Talents* to those who improve what they have, Mat. 25. 29. to reward every Man *according to his Works*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. So that here we may depend upon it, that he will proceed according to Covenant-Rules and Promises, 1 Cor. 10. 13. But in all Acts of meer Prerogative, wherein God is absolutely free, we must be perfectly resigned and content with the Portion allotted to us, without Murmuring or Impatience, and absolutely submit to his All-determining Wisdom and Will, *Job 33. 12, 13. Exod. 33. 19. Phil. 4. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 6. 7. 2 Sam. 15. 20.* And so also when he resumes or takes away any of the good Things which he hath lent us for a Time, having reserved the Property of it still within himself, *Job 1. 21. 1 Sam. 3. 18.* And so when he bestoweth upon others more than he hath bestowed upon us, we are not to envy them, or quarrel with him, who is the free Disposer of his own Gifts, and oweth us nothing, *Mat. 20. 15. Gen. 3. 1, 2. Numb. 16. 1, &c.* But for those Blessings we have received from him from his meer Grace and Goodness, we must see that we be thankful for them, and that we use them well, to his Honour and Glory, and the Ends for which he lent them to us, *Psal. 13. 6. and 145. 1, &c. and 47. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 9, 10, 1 Cor. 4. 2.*

But God's Right of Government extends also to the making of Laws for his Creatures that are capable

pable of moral Government, and backing them with such Sanctions as seem proper and convenient to inforce the Observation of them. He hath a Right to impose upon them whatsoever Laws he pleaseth for the Government of their Actions, which are not contrary to their Natures, or above their Capacities, but what are possible to be understood or observed by them, either by a natural or super-natural Strength, which he is pleased to afford them, and what he knoweth to be reasonable and good for them to observe, tho' they may not sometimes perceive the Reason thereof themselves. And accordingly we are bound in all Duty and Justice to submit to him, and to keep his Commands: For seeing all our Beings and Powers, and Capacities are from him, we must not think to do with them as we will, or to live as we list, but as he will have us, and must consecrate ourselves to his Service, and use all we have for him, and do his Will with all Patience and Readiness in all Things, that he enjoins us, *Acts* 17. 24, 26, 27. *Isa.* 1. 2. *Jo.* 1. 11. *Lev.* 26. 1. *1 Pet.* 4. 2. *Rom.* 12. 1. 11. *Eccel.* 8. 2. *1 Chron.* 28. 8, 9.

Then God hath also a Right to add what Sanctions he pleaseth to his Laws, for the Security of the Subjects Obedience, and to prescribe and execute Punishments, without which, the making of Laws would be a meer precarious and useless Power; and God who knoweth our Frame, must be allowed to know what Measures of Punishment it is fit to threaten us with, and what to inflict; and if a lesser Punishment will not do for the securing of the Divine Government, it is very reasonable it should be stricter and heavier: And therefore we must never cavil or find fault with his Judgments, but we must still justify God in all that he saith or doth to us. There is no Reason at all that ob-

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How God is a Father, and to be conceived by us. 77

stinate Offenders should go unpunish'd ; nor must we think to prescribe to God what Method he shall take with us, but may expect that it shall be in such a way which will smart most. It is not for Subjects to chuse which way they will be punish'd ; but it is the Governour's part to chuse what may be most effectual ; for he that hath a Right to govern and to make Laws, hath a Right to punish in that way that will most answer the End. And therefore by this we are taught patiently to bear all Afflictions at God's Hands ; for we may be sure, that God will not punish above what is right or needful to do, *Job* 34. 11, 12, 23. *Psal.* 119. 75. *Lam.* 3. 38, 39. *Mic.* 7. 9. And if he may raise up to himself a Revenue of Honour, by afflicting or putting to pain any of his innocent Creatures, by their exemplary Sufferings, when there is no special Guilt that calls for it, when the Evil and Pain he inflicts doth not exceed the Benefit he conferreth on them, as we may be sure they shall not ; he hath a Right to do this to them, and they have no Cause to complain at this as a Hardship upon them, but should rather rejoice, if they may any ways by suffering or doing, bring Glory to his Name, when they know in so doing they shall not lose their Reward, *Rom.* 8. 18. *2 Cor.* 4. 16, 17. and 1. 3, 4, 5. *Heb.* 10. 34. and 11. 13, 16. and 12. 2, 3. And lastly, all Creatures being God's, we must not contemn or abuse the very meanest of them, *Prov* 17. 5.

Q. In what Respects may God here be said to be a Father.

A. First and principally with respect to Christ his Son, who is said to be the only begotten Son of God, *Jo.* 1. 14. and whom therefore in the next Article we profess to believe in accordingly, *2 Cor.* 1. 3. And thro' Christ he is the Father of all the Faithful

Faithful by Adoption, whom he hath taken into Covenant with himself, as his Children, *Eph.* 5. 3, - 5 and 4. 6. 1 *Joh.* 3. 1. And He is the Father of all Mankind, by Creation, we having all receiv'd our Beings from him, *Acts* 17. 24, 26. 1 *Cor.* 8. 6. upon the Account of which therefore we owe all Love and Honour, and Obedience to him; and should commit ourselves evermore to his Guidance, Fatherly Care, and Blessing; and should always hope in him, and depend upon him, according to the Rule that He hath given us, *Mal.* 1. 6. *Is.* 63. 16. *Pf.* 103. 13. And we should be contented with that portion of good Things in this Life, and with that Provision that He is pleased to afford us; and should submit patiently to his Corrections, *Is.* 45. 9. 10. *Heb.* 12. 9.

Q. How are we to conceive of God?

A. By removing of all manner of Imperfections from him, and by ascribing of all possible Perfections to him, that are properly and absolutely such, and that are consistent with one another; according to the Notion that we have of Goodness and Perfection. And we can judge no otherwise, than according to the Notions or Ideas we have of things, by that power of Reason, which we have from God. But seeing all our Reason, and Notions, and Ideas, of Things, are originally from God, who is the Author of our Beings, and of all our Senses; from hence it will follow, That all our Notions and Ideas, and just Reasonings about Things, must be most eminently in him. And therefore so must all that Perfection, which we can have any just Notion or Perception of. And it must be much more perfectly in him than we can conceive, because He is not only Perfect, but the original of all Perfection, which no other Thing is to itself; so that He hath more in himself, than all other Beings together have. And that which we justly conceive under

der the notion of an Imperfection, must therefore also be far remov'd from Him.

Q. What is GOD then?

A. He is an Eternal, Infinite and Incomprehensible Spirit, having all Perfection in, and of himself; and the Cause of all that Being or Perfection that any other Things are in any degree Partakers of.

Q. What mean you by that, That God is a Spirit?

A. It is that, which is asserted of God by our Blessed Saviour, *Joh. 4. 24.* And by it is to be understood, That God is not a Material Being, or Body; nor doth consist of bodily Parts; that he is not Flesh or Bone, nor hath Eyes of Flesh, nor seeth as Man seeth; and that He is Invisible, whom no Man hath seen, or can see at any time with his bodily Eyes; which are only made capable of seeing Body or Matter, with its Forms and Accidents; but only with the Eyes of the Mind, or of the Intellect or Understanding, *Luke 24. 39. Rom. 6. 16. 1 Joh. 1. 8. Acts 14. 11-15.*

And therefore tho' we find in Scripture, that *Ears*, and *Eyes*, and *Hands*, are ascrib'd to God; yet we are not to conceive thereby, that God hath any such Parts; but it is spoken only by way of allusion to what we have, and do by them; and is design'd only to signify this to us, That God who hath not bodily Parts, yet can do, and doth all Things which we can do by these Parts, and which we cannot do without them; and according to his own infinitely Perfect Nature doth by himself, who is One most Simple, and Uncompounded Being and Act, more perfectly than we can do by all these Parts, *Pf. 94. 9, 10.* For God *hath Life in himself*, and is Life and Act itself, Perfect and Glorious, *Joh. 5. 26.* A Self-existent, Self-moving Being, giving Life and Motion to all Things, *Pf. 36. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 13.*

6. 13. *Deut.* 30. 20. For there is nothing in God but himself most Perfect; an Intellectual, Powerful Life, acting by his Will, and doth not stand in need of any means or help to effect any thing.

Q. *What may we learn from this, of God's being a Spirit?*

A. That there can be no Image or Representation made of God to our Bodily Senses, or to our Fancy and Imagination; For that which is the Object of these, must have Body and Figure of certain determinate Lineaments, if not Colour also annex'd, which a Spirit hath not; and therefore God being a Spirit, hath not. And therefore He is not to be worshipped in any Image or Bodily Representation, which instead of doing him Honour, would do the greatest Dishonour to his Infinite Nature, by circumscribing him within a certain limit or space, which all Body or Figure must have; and so would tend to give us diminutive Notions of God, and to lessen our Reverence of his Infinite Majesty. Therefore we must conceive of God under no Likeness, when we worship him, but by his Glorious Attributes only, as a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Goodness, &c. *Is.* 40. 18. *Deut.* 4. 15, 16. *Acts* 17. 29.

And God being a Spirit, we must worship him also with our Spirits, with our Spiritual Service, with a Worship suitable to his own Nature, who is also the *Father of Spirits*, and so doth well deserve the Service of our Spirits. We must serve him indeed with our whole Man, because all is his, *1 Cor.* 6. 20. And therefore He hath a Right to all our Powers, and Acts, and Services, both of Soul and Body; and we must present all to him, and act and do all at his Command or Allowance; and not any way withdraw our Shoulders from his Burden, or any part of ourselves, *Rom.* 12. 1. But yet we must not think to put him off with Bodily Service only,
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or with Lip-labour, whilst our Hearts are far from him; but we must offer up our Souls to him also, and get our Hearts affected with what we do in his Service; we must not only bow the Knee to him, but we must bow to him our Affections, and exercise Faith and Love, and Delight, and Reverence towards him, *Job. 4. 24.* All Bodily Service alone being slight and scenical and formal, which God will have no regard to by itself, whensoever we withdraw the Adoration and Respect of our best Part from him, *Matth. 15.* But He always calls for our Hearts and Minds also, without which nothing will please him, *Matth. 22. 37. Prov. 23. 26.* and *3. 1.* and *6. 21. Ps. 51. 6. 1 Thes. 5. 23.*

And this will give us incouragement to believe and hope in him for the conveyance of Spiritual Good to us, to insinuate Light and Comfort into our inward Man; to supply our Spiritual Wants, according to all the exigencies of our Souls: For He that is a Spirit, and made our Spirits, we may be sure knoweth the way into our Spirits, to guide our Spirits, and to govern their Acts; and that he hath not put them out of his own Hands, or out of his own Care: But as He requireth Spiritual Service, we may be sure He can convey to us Spiritual Rewards, that shall infinitely outpass all the Pleasures of Sense; as the Faculties of our Souls are more Noble and more Capacious, and of quicker Sensation than those of mere Sense are, *Prov. 16. 1.* *1 Pet. 4. 19. Ps. 63. 5.*

Q. Why do you say, That God is Eternal?

A. Some Being must necessarily be Self-existent and Eternal; For if once there had been Nothing, there never could have been any Thing; For Something cannot arise from, or be produc'd by Nothing; for Nothing hath no Power, or any positive Attribute belonging to it. Now this Eternal Being, is

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GOD,

G O D, as having his Being *from no other*, because He was the First, and there was none before him; *nor yet out of Nothing*, for out of Nothing, Nothing can arise. And *never having any beginning*; because He could not spring from Nothing, and there was not any thing before him, that He could spring from. Nor *can* have any ending, nor can ever cease to be; because there is none before him, or greater than He, that can have any power over him; and He being Self-existent, must be for ever, as He hath been for ever. Nor is there any thing, but by him, and beneath him, and depending upon him, *Is. 44. 6. I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God. Deut. 32. 40. I lift my Hands to Heaven, and say, I live for ever. Ps. 90. 2. From everlasting to Everlasting, thou art God. 1 Tim. 1. 17. The King Immortal. Rom. 1. 21. The Incorruptible God. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Who only hath Immortality.* And so He hath been always acknowledg'd by all, that have own'd a God; so that this hath been the common Appellation that hath been given to him, *Job. 10. 5. Dan. 4. 34. and 7. 9. And this is his great Glory, Is. 57. 15.*

Q. *What may we Learn from hence?*

A. God being a Self-existent, Eternal and Necessary Being, from hence it will follow, that He is also Independent upon any. Because He is the First, and the first Mover, so that all Motion is from him; and therefore can be mov'd by none, and is subject to none. So that He is absolutely Free, and Lord of his own Actions; and can be controul'd by none, *Is. 14. 27. nor is bound to wait for Orders, nor hath any need of help, Deut. 32. 39. See now that I, even I am he; and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive.* Whereas all the Being and Powers of all others are from him; and so are dependant upon, and controulable by him.

him. Those that are in a sort Free Agents, yet are not absolutely Lords of their own Actions, but are subject to his Will and Determinations, as He thinks fit to interpose; and therefore can't bring any thing to pass of themselves, *Jer.* 10. 23. *Prov.* 16. 9. and 21. 30. their Understanding and Ideas are all dependent; the Will itself not absolutely out of all Rule; their Power and Motion dependent, and to be stop'd, or turn'd, as He pleaseth, *Prov.* 16. 1. therefore they are not to be trusted in, or depended upon, for any good in themselves; but God alone, *Is.* 26. 4. *Job* 23. 13. *Pf.* 118. 8.

And from hence also it will follow, that God is Unchangeable, and that He never groweth old, or weak with Age; there being no Principle of Change in himself, nor any Being above him to work any Change in him; because there was none before him, or that is superior to him, *Jam.* 1. 17. *Pf.* 102. 26, 27. *Is.* 40. 28. 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. *Mal.* 3. 6. And hence we may infer, that all his Attributes and Perfections are Eternal and Unchangeable also, so that He is able to help us at all times, as well as ever; which is Matter of great Comfort under all our Failures, and mutability of Things, when no confidence is to be put in us or them, *Prov.* 28. 26. *Jer.* 17. 5. and 2. 13. and 146. 3, 4, 5. *Pf.* 84. 2.

But now we may see from hence, considering all his other Perfections joyn'd with this, that He is able to give us Eternal Life, and to bestow everlasting Good upon us; and we may certainly depend upon him for the fulfilling his Promises thereof; and can never have any cause to leave him, thro' fear of any deficiency in him, *Pf.* 103. 17. and 52. 1. 1 *Chron.* 16. 34. *Pf.* 136. 1. *Deut.* 32. 39. *Pf.* 105. 8. and 111. 3. 8. 1 *Pet.* 1. 25. *Is.* 40. 28. *Jer.* 10. 15, 16. *Pf.* 73. 25, 26. *Deut.* 33. 27. *Is.* 51. 6, 7, 8.

But then it must needs be the most dreadful Misery of wicked Men, that they have such an One for their Enemy; who is able to inflict eternal Punishment upon them; and therefore it must needs be the greatest Folly to provoke such an Eternal All-powerful Being against them, *Matth. 10. 28. Is. 33. 14. Matth. 25. 41, — 46. 2 Thes. 1. 9.*

Q. How is God said to be Infinite?

*A. As He is without all Bounds and Limits, both in his Essence and Attributes; fills all Places, infinitely beyond what we are able to imagine, being no where included, and no where excluded; so that there is no Place or Space, where we can say, Here He is, and not There. Tho' Heaven is the Place where there is the most Illustrious manifestation of his Glory, for the blisful Entertainment of the glorious Inhabitants there; and therefore He is said, to sit in the Heavens, and to dwell in the Heavens, as the special Habitation of his Holiness, and of his Glory; sitting upon the Throne of his Majesty there: But yet is every where ineffably present; so that the *Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him*, *1 King. 8. 27.* So that the whole Universe is but a small thing to him, *Is. 40. 12, 15, 17. Job 11. 7. Is. 66. 1. 1 Kin. 8. 27. Jer. 23. 23. Ps. 139. 5. Eccl. Acts. 17. 27. Amos 9. 2, 3. Ps. 145. 3.**

We have a Notion in ourselves of a Being Infinitely Perfect, tho' we cannot have a positive comprehensive Notion of such Perfection; for then it would not be Infinite. This Notion none but an Infinitely Perfect Being could be the Author of. And He that is Infinitely Perfect, must have an Infinite Amplitude or greatness of Substance, as well as other Perfection. None but a Being Infinitely Perfect in Power and Wisdom, could at first produce and put together in such admirable Order or Harmony,

Harmony, such a vast Universe of Beings, and give Motion to all. And there can be no better Indication of the Nature of a Substance or Essence, than by the Attributes that belong to it: And if the Divine Attributes are Infinite, then so must his Essence be, which they are not really distinct from. And He that did produce all Things by his All-commanding Power and Will, could have no need of the Agency of Creatures towards the Production of any Thing; but must be every where present to do it, by his own Immediate Agency; so that his own Immense Being must be Infinitely spread and diffus'd over All. And without this, He could not inspect and govern Man in all Places as He doth, or be acquainted with the secret Motions of Man's Heart in all Places, as He is, who is the Searcher of Hearts.

Q. What may we Learn from hence?

A. It should stir up in us very great and admiring Thoughts of God, and of his Glorious and Outstretch'd Being, *Pf. 139. 6. Job 11. 7.* And it should produce in us very low and mean Thoughts of ourselves, and of all Creatures in comparison of him; who are such little Things, compar'd with the Immense Greatness and Majesty of God; and we should be asham'd to exalt or extol ourselves, when to the Great God we are not so much as a Mote in the Sun, or as a Pile of Grass to the whole Universe; but are as nothing, *Pf. 8. 3, 4. Job 83. 4, 5, 6. and 40. 9, 10 and 42. 2.*

This should engage us always to an holy and reverend Carriage before him, in our closest Privacies, and our most secret Retirements; and should make us sincere and upright in his Presence, who is every where nigh unto us: This should influence all the parts of our Carriage, in all Places, and in all Companies; seeing his Eye is always upon us, He

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teeth us, who is our Governor, and will be our Judge. So that taking in this Consideration together with other things, it should engage us to an universal Caution and Watchfulness, *Acts* 17. 27. *Gen.* 17. 1. *Eccles* 5. 1. It should be a guard to us against all Sin and Temptation whatsoever; and should make us abstain from all Pollutions and Passions that may be offensive to him, who, as He is every where present, is most Holy too, and cannot endure any Sin: And the secret Chambers, the deepest Vaults, the wide Mountains, and solitary Wildernesses, and darkest Dens, are all open to his All-seeing Eye; who is with us at Bed, and at Board, and wherever we go; who sees all the boilings of Lust, the desires of Revenge, and the workings of all our Passions, *Prov.* 5. 20, 21. *Is.* 1. 16. *Amos* 9. 2, 3.

And this is a great Comfort and Incouragement to every good Man, in all his Wants and Troubles, to think that God is still near unto him; who, as He is Omnipresent, is Merciful and Gracious withal, who pitieth the good Man's Case, and compassionates all his Wants and Weaknesses. *Pf.* 16. 8. *Is.* 43. 2. *Pf.* 46. 1, 2. *1 Kin.* 6. 15, 16. And this incourageth us to Pray to him in all Places; our Prayers having no long Journey to take to come unto him, whose Eyes are in every Place, and whose Ears are always open to their Cries; and neither Walls nor Bars, nor Gates, can shut out God from them, who was with *Job* upon the Dunghill, with *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon, with *Daniel* in the Den, with *Hagar* in the Wilderness, with *Jacob* lying upon the Stone all Night, with *John* in Banishment, and *Jonah* in the Whale's Belly, *1 Tim.* 2. 8. *Jon.* 2. 2. *Pf.* 34. 18. and 145. 18, 19. *1 Kin.* 8. 59.

Q. How is God said to have all Perfection in, and of himself.

A. Because

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Because He is Self-existent, and hath his Being of no other; therefore neither can his Perfections be deriv'd from any other, nor can there be any other to stint him in any, *Ex. 3. 13, 14. 2 Sam. 7. 22. Deut. 33. 26. Is. 40. 25.* So that all other Beings have only so much as God is pleas'd to impart to them; but God himself hath All, all Fulness, and all Excellency, all Beauty and Glory. He hath all kinds of Excellency and Perfection in himself; whereas all other Beings have, some one, and some another; but none have all but God, who is the Cause of all that all others have, and therefore hath all virtually and eminently in himself, without any want or defect of any thing, *1 Job. 1. 5.*

And as He hath all Kinds, so He hath all Degrees of it. He is not only Perfect in a certain Sphere, as other Things are; but He hath all Perfection that is possible. He is absolutely Perfect, without all comparison; whereas some other Things are perfect only in comparison of those that are less perfect. But He being Self-existent, there is nothing to set bounds to his Being; so that He is an Infinite Ocean of Perfection, without Bank or Shore. And He needs nothing out of himself to maintain himself; whereas all other Things stand in need of him, as the Spring stands in need of the Fountain: So that there is none like him; none that is thus originally, independently, and completely Good, but God, *Matth. 18. 19.*

And then He hath all this Being, and Excellency and Perfection together, all in one Act; not by Parcels, or by Succession, or Gradation. He hath every thing present, and is always the same, without addition or diminution; there being nothing to add to him, or to take from him. So that what He is, He is at once, He is always, *I am*, all his whole Excellency is One. Whereas there is in other

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Things a certain proceſſion or gradation ; becauſe it is all an adventitious thing, ſuperadded to their Natures ; ſo that they have not always a preſent Power to act, or not, in ſuch a kind, till they have made ſome farther acquiſitions to complete their Capacities and Abilities by new acceſſions of Power, either in kind or degree. So that when we moſt want, then Creatures may be moſt wanting to us : Whereas God is always preſent with all Power, *Pſ. 46. 1.*

And he hath this Being and Excellency together, without any Poſſibility of Failure ; becauſe being without all Cauſe, he hath no paſſive Power whereby he ſhould be ſubject to any thing, or ſuffer or receive from any thing any Impreſſion ; and he cannot fail in himſelf in any Part of his Excellency, becauſe it is all himſelf ; and ſo nothing in him can ceaſe or decay any more than he himſelf can ceaſe : So that as he himſelf is, ſo all in him is immutable and unchangeable for ever, *Pſal. 102. 27. Mal. 3. 6.* and therefore we can never ſeek him in a wrong time, as we may do Creatures that are ſubject to decay, *Job 6. 15.*

Q. What may this teach us ?

A. That there is an All-ſufficiency in God, whereby he is able to beſtow all Perfections, and to confer all Good upon us, that we can be capable of receiving ; and that he can make us happy to the higheſt degree, which no Creature is able to do, nor yet all of them together ; becauſe they have ſo many Imperfections in them, that they cannot answer all our Wants, or fill up all our Capacities, as a God can ; and they have all their Power alſo at his Diſpoſe, ſo that they can do no more for us than he gives them Power or Inclination to do, and no longer than he continueth the ſame, *Gen. 17. 1. Hoſ. 14. 3.* But God is able to make all

Grace

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Grace to abound towards us, that having All-sufficiency in all Things, we may abound to every good Work; being enriched in every thing to all Bountifulness, 2 Cor. 9. 8. I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, Joh. 6. 35. They that seek the Lord shall not want any good Thing, Psal. 34. 10. and 36. 5, 6. and 23. 1. Eph. 3. 20. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us.

And therefore our great Care should be above all, to get him for our Portion, *Psal. 4. 6. and 16. 5, 6. and 73. 25, 26.* And then we should rejoice in him as such, tho' in the Want of all other Things, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. Psal. 94. 18, 19.* And we should build our Comfort and Happiness upon him alone, and seek it all from him, because he hath enough to satisfy in all, Life, Light, Power, Goodness; and all that we can need, and then our Comfort would be stable and certain, which can never be, if we build upon imperfect and mutable Creatures, *Psal. 27. 10.* And this should engage us to dedicate ourselves intirely to God, to serve him fully, *Psal. 119. 57.* because he that hath all Perfection and Good in himself, we may be sure can fully reward us; so that we shall never lose by our Adherence to him, *Heb. 11. 6.* He can bear us out in all Troubles, and make up all Losses or Sufferings, or Labours, that we are at in his Service; and therefore God's faithful Servants should not be discouraged with Fears or Doubts of the Issues of Things when they are engaged in his Service, or in doing any thing for God, or his Interest or Cause in the World, *2 Chron. 25. 9.* And Christians that have God All-sufficient for their Portion, should have great Minds, and have their Spirits raised and lifted up above all these earthly Things, which are all but little and imperfect Things, and are of no Reckoning in comparison

riſon of God, in whom all Fulneſs dwelleth, *Pſal.* 16. 11. and 36. 5, 6, 7, 8. and 145. 15.

Q. What mean you by that, that God is incomprehenſible?

A. It is ſpoken with reſpect to us, who cannot by ſearching find out God, tho' we may know ſomething of him, enough to engage us to him, and to juſtify the Wiſdom of Religion in our Worſhip of him and ſerving him; But we cannot find out the Almighty to Perfection, *Job* 11. 7, 8, 9. God is ſuch a Peerleſs Majeſty, and ſo exceeding great, that we cannot comprehend him, or have adequate Notions of him; our Capacities are too little for it, and our Reach too ſhort to dive into this Depth of the Divine Being. We can bear the Sight but of a little of him here, and only ſee his Back-parts in the Discoveries he makes of himſelf, in his Creatures and in his Word, *Exod.* 33. 20. his glorious Eſſence being of that Splendor, that it would even dazle and put out our Eyes to look fully upon him; therefore here we ſee but in a *Glaſs darkly*, *1 Cor.* 13. Nor can we have in the State of full'eſt Perfection in Heaven, a full and comprehensive Notion of him; the Reaſon of which is, that his Being and Perfections are infinite, which cannot be contain'd within the limited Capacities of our finite Minds, as ours always will be, no more than the vaſt Ocean can be contained in a Veſſel of an Inch ſquare.

So that there may be infinite Things in God, which we cannot poſſibly have a full Perception of, and may be ſo for ever; tho' our Capacities may be advancing never ſo much, becauſe all will ſtill be within the narrow Sphere of Creatures; and therefore the Happineſs of Heaven itſelf in the Viſion of the ever-blessed God, may be progreſſive to Eternity, becauſe all his Excellency can never be exhausted by us; and we can never know
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so much, but we may still know more of him as far as our Understandings are capable of any Improvement; and at last there will be more for us to admire than we can ever reach to, *Neb. 9. 5. He is exalted above all Blessing and Praise, Isa. 40. 15, 22. For the Lord is a great God, Psal. 95. 3. His Greatness is unsearchable, and 145. 3. Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, Job 37. 23. He dwells in Light that no Man can approach unto, 1 Tim. 6. 16. We may know enough of him to fill us with the most ravishing Delight, which will be enough for our Happiness; but he is above us and beyond us for us to comprehend him thoroughly, and so he ever will be, 2 Sam. 7. 22. Thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like thee, neither is there any besides thee, according to all, that we have heard with our Ears.*

Q. What use may this be of to us?

A. It should compose us to Humility and Modesty, in our thinking and speaking of him: We may be sensible that we are but very little things, that have but a very narrow extent of Being, of little Power, and of a shallow Understanding, Job 11. 12. And if we did but consider, how incomprehensibly great God is, this should stop our bold and presumptuous Confidence in our dictating things about him; We may well be posed and dazled about the Trinity in Unity, or the Mode of the Divine Being, when we know so little of the Mode of any Thing. What the Scripture revealeth, that we are obliged to receive, and there we must stop. If God had thought fit that more should have been made known, the Scripture would have revealed more. The like may be said of many Things concerning the Divine Decrees, and Counsels and Judgments, which are so far above us. It becomes us poor little Creatures to be wise unto Sobriety, about those

these Things, and to say with the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 33. O the Depth of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God? How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out? And with Moses, Deut. 29. 29. Secret Things belong to the Lord our God; but those Things that are revealed belong to us and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of his Law.*

Thus humble and modest also should we be in our Carriage to him. For what are we, to exalt ourselves in the Presence of such an incomprehensible Majesty? The Thoughts of his high and unsearchable Excellency should bring down our proud Looks and high Thoughts of our own poor Understandings and Capacities, and Power; so that we should never censure his Works, or Counsels, or Providences. For whether we can give an Account of them or no, we may be sure all is right. He is an Object too big, and too dazzling for us to pry farther into, either as to his Essence, or Counsels or Works, and much more to censure or find fault with any thing about him, or to bring what he doth to the Test of our Examination, as if he were bound always to satisfy us. We are bound to understand the Rule of our own Acts, but God's Acts may be often too great a Deep for us, *Eccl. 8. 17. Psal. 97. 2, 9.* And considering his Incomprehensible Majesty, we should be afraid to displease or provoke him, *For who knoweth the power of his Anger, Psal. 90. 11. With God is terrible Majesty; Men do therefore fear before him, Job 37. 22, 23, 24.* And we should submit our Expectations of good Things from him in this Life, to his supreme Counsel and Determination; but we may be sure he hath Ways to work that we know not of, and to fulfil his Promises above what we are able to think, and to make us happy above what we can have any Knowledge

Knowledge or Perception of, 1 Cor. 2. 9. Eph. 3. 19, 20. Phil. 4. 7.

Q. What mean you by that special Attribute Almighty? which is here added

A. It signifieth the Power of God, either to hinder, or to effect and work, and to bring to pass any Events; which is an Attribute commonly ascribed to God in holy Scripture, and is what all People have had a Notion of concerning God, *Psal.* 62. 11. and 24. 8. *Jer.* 32. 18, 19. *Psal.* 147. 5. and 29. 1. *Gen.* 17. 1. *Rev.* 4. 8. God hath all Power in himself, without deriving it from any other, because he is the first, and is the Fountain and Original of all; and whatsoever therefore any other Power can do, that God can do, because all the Power any have is from him, *In him we live and move, and have our Being*, *Acts* 17. 28. But God can also do more than any other Power can do; he hath a Power and Activity beyond and above all other Power whatsoever. So that he can do those Things that are impossible to others, and that are impossible to Nature, having a Power to work above the Laws that are ordinarily settled in Nature; for he hath not given all the Power to Nature, that he hath in himself; for he can create that which is not, which nothing else can do. All the Miracles that have been wrought, are an Instance of and Evidence of this, *Isa.* 45. 5, 6, 7. *Exod.* 8. 19. *Joh.* 9. 32.

But God can do more still, than all this; for he can do all Things that can be done, or that are the Object of any Power, *Job* 42. *Luke* 17. 27. *Phil.* 3. 21. *Eph.* 3. 20. *Jer.* 32. 17. But there are some things indeed which are absolutely impossible, and which cannot be done by any Power, even by an Infinite, not from a defect of Power, but because of the Repugnancy and Contradiction of the Things in themselves, which destroy one another,

ther, and therefore cannot consist together. As for the same thing to be, and not to be at the same time; or to make that which is past, not to have been; or for the same Body, that is but one, to be whole together in divers and distant Places; which is for a Thing to be One, and not to be One. And so there are other Things, that are inconsistent with the Nature of God, and are repugnant to his Natural Perfection; As, for God to be mortal, or dye, or grow weary, or cease to be. As there are other Things, that are contrary to his Moral Perfection (as it may be call'd for distinction sake) and contradict his other Attributes; which therefore cannot be done, because that would be to the aversion of some Divine Perfection; whereas none of the Divine Perfections can cease to be. For then God should cease to be, or should be what He cannot be. And therefore it is said, *That God cannot lye*, Heb. 6. 18. So neither can He be cruel, or unjust, or unfaithful, because it is repugnant to his Goodness; and that would be to change Perfection for Imperfection. But whatsoever is not repugnant to be, or that there can be any consistent Notion of, that God can do.

He can do whatsoever he will, which is a vast excess of Power, which the greatest and mightiest of all other Beings cannot reach unto, *Pf. 135. 6*. Nor is it fit that such a Power should be communicated to any other Being, because they would not have Goodness or Wisdom enough, to make a right use of it. But God can never will any thing, but what is reasonable and good.

And God can do, whatsoever He doth, with Ease, and without any Labour. It is but for him to speak the Word, as He did at the Creation, *Let there be Light*, &c. He is never weary or faint, or his Strength exhausted by Action, *Is. 40. 28, 29, 30*. Therefore the Government of the World is no disturbance

disturbance to him; nor can He be ever oblig'd to rest; or leave off his Work or Government thro' tiredness, his Power being fresh, and always the same, because it is Infinite, so that nothing can be hard to him.

He hath a Power over all Creatures, so that none can oppose or hinder him in any thing, that He hath a Will or Purpose to do; because their Power and Being too is deriv'd from him; so that whatsoever Enemies or Difficulties there are in the way of his Working, they are nothing to him, *Job* 9. 12. *Is.* 27. 4. and 43. 13. *Pf.* 37. 20. But He can hinder the Creatures doing, what they have a tendency to, or what they are wont to do: For their Power being from him, He can take it away or destroy it, when He pleaseth. And if He doth but suspend or substract his Power, they can do nothing. And therefore the Fire could not burn the Three Children, *Dan.* 3. 27. Nor the Lyons hurt Daniel, *Dan.* 6. 22. Nor the Viper St. Paul, *Acts* 28. 5. And if He will countermand any of the Creatures, they can exert and put forth no Power, *Exod.* 12. 13—23. *Job* 1. 12. and 2. 6. *Job.* 7. 30. *Is.* 7. 6, 7. and 36. 6, 7—24, 25. *Job.* 19. 11. *Acts* 17. 28. If He pleaseth to work with Means, He can command and call them out when He will; and He can use them as He will, and all the Powers they have; because all Creatures are his, and all their Power is his; so that He can never be at a loss for want of Means or Instruments, but when one Instrument is gone, He can raise up another, and another, *Pf.* 147. 15. and 33. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Amos* 5. 8. *Is.* 7. 18. He hath the same Power over Men, as He hath over the other Creatures, to make use of them to what Purposes He pleaseth; He can call forth any of them all, and endue them with Power to act; and when He hath any Enterprize to bring
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to pass, He hath presently those by, that He can enable to effect it, *Mark* 3. 13. *Is.* 44. 26, 27, 28. and 45. 1—6. *Dan.* 4. 25. For He hath power over Mens Spirits, tho' they seem of all Things the most ungovernable, to limit or restrain, and to incline and bow them which way He pleaseth, *Prov.* 16. 1, 7, 8. 2 *Crbon.* 18. 31. *Job* 12. 16. *Ezr.* 1. 1. *Is.* 46. 10, 11. and 10. 5, 6. When one Instrument is gone, or when one useful Man is gone, He is able to raise up another: For He hath the residue of the Spirit. And thus we see He provides a Succession of Men in successive Generations to do his Work. When *Elijah* was gone, *Elisha* was rais'd up, and endued with the same Spirit, and did as great Things as he: When *Moses* was gone, the Spirit rested upon *Joshua*: When one Judge was dead, God sent others to work Deliverances; and one Prophet after another.

If He pleaseth, He is able to work by himself, without Means, by the Power which He hath in himself: For Means make no accession of Power to him, having no Power but what they have from him: So that He doth not make use of Means out of want, but out of favour. Thus our Saviour wrought Cures without the help of Physick. And so He will raise up the Bodies of Men again by his Power, *Phil.* 3. ult. As He rais'd *Lazarus* by his mighty Word only, *Job.* 11. And the Damsel, *Mark* 5. 41. And He was conceiv'd himself in his Human Nature, by the Power of the Holy Ghost, *Luke* 1. And thus He can work in other Cases, 2 *Kin.* 3. 17, 18. Or, He can work by unlikely and improbable Means, that have little aptitude in themselves to produce the effect, and can make use of little Instruments, to do great Things, that the Glory may be of God, 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. *Judg.* 7. 4. 1 *Sam.* 14. 6, 7. *Amos* 5. 9. *Jer.* 37. 10. and 49. 20.

Or he can make use of those Things or Ways which seem to have a quite contrary Disposition and Tendency, to bring about his own Purposes, and to make those Things that seem to be Hindrances, to become Furtherances, to bring about that Work and End that is designed by him, *Acts* 9. 15. *Phil.* 1. 12. *Zech.* 4. 7. Thus it was as to *Joseph's* selling into *Egypt*, *Haman's* Plot against *Mordecai* and the *Jews*, the Accusation brought against *Daniel* and the three Children, the taking of the Ark by the *Philistines*, &c.

And thus one way or other, or which way He pleaseth, He hath a Power to help in the greatest Extremity, in the very Pinch of Necessity, when all Things seem desperate and all Hope is gone: He is able to turn the Face or Scene of Things upon a sudden, when there is no Expectation or Appearance of any such thing, *1 Kings* 18. 41, 44. *2 Cor.* 1. 9, 10. *Deut.* 32. 36. *Psal.* 142. 4, 5. and 116. 3. *Isa.* 37. 3, 33. *2 Kings* 7. 1, 2. *Rev.* 11. 8, 17. *Acts* 23. 12, &c. *Zech.* 14. 7. *Job* 42. 10. *Psal.* 64. 7. Thus he is able to do for us in our greatest Straights and Difficulties, and to bestow upon us all Good, *Isa.* 59. 1, 2. *Psal.* 84. 11. *Deut.* 33. 26. *Phil.* 4. 19. *2 Cor.* 9. 8. and 12. 8. *Jude* 24. And He hath no less a Power to punish, or to inflict any kind of Evil, and to bring down the Power of the greatest and strongest of his Enemies, how much soever they may exalt themselves, *Psal.* 68. 20, 21. *Isa.* 10. 12. and 14. 15, 24, 25. *Jer.* 18. 6, 7. *Amos* 2. 14, 15. *Rev.* 6. 15, 16.

Q. What is the Use that we are to make hereof?

A. It is a just Warning to us, that we fear to provoke this Almighty God, by sinning against him, lest we stir up his Indignation against us, and there be none to deliver. But we should always labour to have a mighty Awe and Reverence of

the Divine Majesty upon our Hearts, and that we express and shew it in all our Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, *Jer.* 5. 22. and 10. 7. *Amos* 3. 8. *Psal.* 90. 11. *Mat.* 10. 18. *Psal.* 66. 3, 4, 5. *1 Cor.* 10. 22. *Psal.* 76. 7. *Ezra* 8. 22. *Job* 9. 4, 13. *Psal.* 119. 120. *1 Sam.* 6. 20.

And this should teach us whenever we are busied or engaged in any part of God's Service, or in any just or good Undertaking, to trust in God to bear us out in it, and to carry us through it; and therefore to take Heart and Courage in what we go about for God's sake, and for the promoting of his Interest and Kingdom, which we may hope He will shew himself a Patron to. And though the Enemies and Opposers are never so mighty, yet if God will interpose, He can over-rule all Men and all Events; and He can stop or abate, or divert the Power of the most hurtful Things or Persons. If He seeth fit for wise and just Ends, which we understand not, to withdraw his Blessing and Influences in such Cases, which yet may be only to try our Faith and Constancy for the present, and to raise up a greater Revenue of Glory to himself in the Success at last, yet however our Reward is with Him; and yet we should not presently despair of Success neither, nor give over quickly, but wait with a Dependence upon the Divine Strength and Help, whilst we seek God's Honour, and not our own in all, *Psal.* 37. 38, 39. and 125. 1. *Phil.* 4. 13. *Psal.* 23. 4. *1 Sam.* 17. 45. By this should Magistrates and Ministers be encouraged to set Reformation afoot, to preach and beat down Errors and Vices, to break wicked Customs; and good Men to pursue any pious and charitable Designs, though there may be little Probability of Success from present Appearances; for if God will please to espouse the Cause, all Difficulties

culties shall vanish before him, and He will uphold his Servants, *Acts* 18. 9, 10. *Isa.* 41. 10, 11.

We should have a most firm, unshaken, and most assured Trust in God, to make good all his Promises, though they seem never so hard to be brought to pass; for we may be sure there is nothing which God undertakes but what shall be done: For there can be nothing hard or difficult to Him who hath all Power, who is also most faithful and true, and hath sworn by Himself, to give us the greater Confidence in his Word, *Heb.* 6. 13. So that the Power and Faithfulness of God together, should fill us with Joy, and Hope in believing. And by thus doing, we give Glory to God's Truth and Power, as *Abraham* did, *Rom.* 4. 19, 20, 21, 22. And 'tis both our Duty and Interest so to do, *Psal.* 146. 5, 6. And it is on the other side a doing great Dishonour to God, when any one questions his Power to accomplish his Word and Promises, *Psal.* 78. 19, 20. *2 Kings* 7. 18, 19. *Mat.* 14. 28, 29, 30, 31. And so 'tis a Dishonour to Him to run to any other, or to put our Trust in Creatures or Means, which are of themselves but weak and little Things, and whose Strength is easily blasted and gon; whereas the Power and Truth of God is a firm and stable Foundation for Confidence, *Psal.* 62. 6, 7, 8. 9. And therefore this is an Encouragement to us, to go to him in all our Straights, and in all our Wants, *Psal.* 62. 1. and 43. 1, 2. and 60. 11, 12, and 33. 16, 17, 20.

This should also engage us to a ready Obedience to all God's Commands however troublesome they may any of them seem to us; because He hath a Power to impose Laws upon us, and to punish or reward us according to our Obedience or Disobedience thereunto; and we have Reason to expect that He will do it, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Psal.* 76. 11. *Heb.*

12. 28. This Obedience *Abraham* render'd to Him upon this Account, even in those Things wherein his Commands seem'd to thwart his own Promises, *Heb. 19. Gen. 22. 3.* So should we do in those Things which seem to thwart our present Interest, and we may be sure that we shall not be Losers thereby, *Mat. 16. 24, 25. 2 Cor. 4. 18.* For we should be hereby sensible that it is in vain to contend with God about any Thing that He either enjoins to us, or layeth upon us, *Isa. 45. 9, 10.*

Q. Is not our Almighty God also All-knowing and All-wise?

A. Yes: This is an Attribute also frequently ascribed to God in holy Scripture; and it is a plain and natural Notion that all have of God, That He knoweth all Things: For God is Infinite in all his Perfections; so that there are no Bounds to His Being or Excellency in any kind. Thus *Psal. 147. 6. His Understanding is Infinite, Job 37. 16. He is perfect in Knowledge, 1 Joh. 3. 20. He knoweth all Things, So Job. 21. 17.* He knoweth all the Natures of Things, and all the Properties and Powers that they are endued with; because he himself gave them all, and that before they were made or brought to pass, because He had the Idea of all Things in himself, *Acts 15. 18. Known unto God are all his Works from the Foundation of the World.* And He knoweth all their Possibilities, because He knoweth all their Powers, because they are all from Him, *Heb. 4. 3. All Things are open and naked before his Eyes, Psal. 147. 4. He telleth the Number of the Stars. Mat. 10. 30, All the Hairs of our Head are numbered.*

Thus He knoweth all that is in Man, all the Dispositions and Inclinations in Mens Hearts, whether they be Good or Evil; for He is the Searcher of Hearts, and is acquainted with all the Counsels,
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and knoweth all their Thoughts afar off, *Psal.* 139. 2, &c. and 44. 21. *Prov.* 15. 11. *Gen.* 18. 19. *Deut.* 31. 21. *Job.* 2. 24, 25. and 6. 64. *Isa.* 48. 4. *Psal.* 94. 9. *Acts* 1. 24. *Psal.* 7. 10. *1 Kings* 8. 39. *Jer.* 17. 9, 10. *1 Sam.* 16. 7. He knoweth all their Privacies and Retirements, their Policies and Plots, and all their secret Transactions, *Job* 34. 21. *Psal.* 139. 19. *Mat.* 6. 4, 6, 18. *Rom.* 2. 16. *Jer.* 23. 23, 24. and 16. 7. *Job* 31. 4. *Prov.* 5. 20, 21. He knoweth the Principles that they act from, the Ends for which, with all the other Circumstances of all their Actions, *1 Sam.* 2. 3. *For the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed,* *Prov.* 5. 21. *He pondereth all their Goings.*

And he doth not only know Things that are present, but all Things that are to come, or that would come to pass in such Circumstances: And by this he distinguisheth himself from Idols, *Isa.* 41. 22, 23. We find by the Prophecies and Predictions of the Scriptures, That future Events, tho' at the greatest Distance, and that have depended upon the free Actions of Men, yet have been fore-known by him: For the Powers and Faculties that they act by, are His; the Objects that they act upon, are under his Government and Rule, and He knoweth all the Tendencies of Mens Spirits, and by what, and in what manner they will be determined. Thus the Affliction of the Children of *Israel* in *Egypt* was foretold, *Gen.* 15. 13. our Saviour's Passion, with divers of its Circumstances, *Mat.* 26. 21, 24. 34. *Jo.* 6. 65. The rising up of the false Prophets, *Acts* 20. 29. *2 Pet.* 2. 1, *2 Thes.* 2. 3.

And such is the Knowledge of God, that being most Perfect, He seeth all Things together, and at one View, and in one Instant; and yet with the greatest Clearness and Distinction, all their Beings, Kinds, Properties, Powers, and Acts; for *in him*

is no Darknes at all, or any Imperfection: Where- as to see by Parts, and some at one View and some at another, argueth Imperfection, which infinite Knowledge cannot be subject to. God knoweth and seeth all by a present Intuition in one most perfect Act, without any Deduction or Reasoning about Things, or drawing of Consequences one after another.

And from God's perfect and unerring Knowledge and Understanding of all Things, we may infer his most perfect Wisdom, in making a right Estimate of them, and in fitting Means to Ends to bring about all things so as may be best and most to his own Glory. This Wisdom is often ascribed also to God, *Job 9. 4. He is wise in Heart, and mighty in Strength. Jer. 32. 19. Great in Counsel. Job 36. 5. Mighty in Strength and Wisdom. Psal. 104. 24. O Lord! how manifold are thy Works? in Wisdom hast thou made them all, Dan. 2. 20. Wisdom and Might are his, Rom. 16. ult. Who is God only wise. Rom. 11. 33. O the Depths of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God.* This Wisdom of God appears in innumerable Instances, in the Variety, Make, and Form of all his Creatures, in the wonderful Order that is seen in all Things; in the fitting and disposing of all Things to their proper Ends and Uses, both in whole and in part; in ordering all the Dependences of Things. And because God hath such a perfect Knowledge of all Things, we may be sure He judgeth of all Things right, and puts a right and proper Value upon them, because he knoweth their Usefulness and Worth. And He that knoweth all Things, knoweth how to make use of all Things as He pleaseth, and cannot err or be mistaken in his Counsels; but He knoweth what to prescribe or pitch upon, and to do all Things in the proper Seasons and the fittest

secret Times, to bring about the Ends which He designs; and we must always conclude that both Ends and Means are best which God pitcheth upon, and that there can be no Error in God's Designations or Works, in Ends, or Means, or Application of them by Him, *Eph. 1. 11. Who worketh all things according to the Counsel of his Will.*

Q. What is the Use that we should make of all this?

A. This also should give us high and admiring Thoughts of God: For we may well say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 139. 2. Such Knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* And it should make us watchful over ourselves, and over all our Ways, and that even in secret when no Eye seeth us, nor is there any to observe our Walking, that we may approve ourselves to God that seeth in secret. And we should not only have respect to our Actions in the Matter of them, or to our Words, or to the outward Performance of any Duty, or to the avoiding of any Sin in the outward Act; but we should have respect to the inward Frame of our Spirits in all we do; to our Principles, to our secret Intentions, and to all the Thoughts of our Hearts; to our inward Lusts and Affections, remembering that we have to do with one that is perfectly acquainted with all, and will bring all to Judgment; one that cannot be imposed upon by hypocritical Shows or false Pretences, but can discern between Truth and Falsehood, and will not be mocked by us, *1 Chron. 28. 9. Col. 3. 23. Jer. 4. 14. Jam. 4. 8. Eccl. 12. 14.* And when we have done well in the Uprightness of our Hearts, we may take Comfort in the Knowledge that he hath of our Uprightness, however we may be censured by Men, or whatever severe Judgments they may pass upon us, as oftentimes it comes to pass, that Truth and Innocency,

and upright Dealing is run down in the World. But we may depend upon it, that God's Judgment will be right, and that He will clear our Integrity one time or other, here or hereafter. And therefore we may commit our Cause to Him, and should appeal to his Judgment against all the unjust Judgments of Men, *Psal.* 43. 1. and 7. 8, 9. *Job* 31. 5, 6. *1 Cor.* 4. 3, 4, 5. *2 Cor.* 10. 18. *Psal.* 37. 5, 6.

But it should teach us never to lean to our own Understanding, but to commit ourselves and all our Ways to Him and to his Conduct and Guidance, and to seek to Him for Wisdom and Direction in all our Ways, who is able to impart Counsel to our Minds, and hath promised to give Wisdom to them that ask, *Jam.* 1. 5. *Job* 32. 8. *Prov.* 3. 5. and 2. 4, 6, 7. He knoweth the very Groaning of our Spirits, and is acquainted with all our Wants, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. *Heb.* 4. 15, 16. So that this is a great Encouragement to Prayer, *Mat.* 6. 6. *Psal.* 103. 14.

And God being thus All-wise, we ought to take God's Judgment in all Things, and value those Things that he valueth, and prefer those Things that He preferreth, and count those Things little that he counts little, however they may be valued or esteemed by Men of corrupt Minds that have lost the true Relish of Things, and are govern'd only by Sense and Passion, *Luke* 16. 14, 15. *1 Job.* 2. 15. *Eccl.* 2. 11. *Prov.* 4. 7, 8. and 28. 12, 13, 14, 15. *Mat.* 6. 33. *Job.* 6. 27.

And therefore also we ought to have an high Esteem of all God's Ordinances and Institutions that are appointed by Him as apt Means for our Improvement in Wisdom and Grace; and therefore we should not ask, What Profit is there in Praying, or in attending upon the publick Ordinances, or Sacraments? &c. For seeing God hath appointed

appointed them, we may be sure they are fit for us to use, though we perceive no Benefit by them for the present in our own Apprehension; the Fault of which yet may not be in the Seed, but in the Soil, because we do not come with prepared Hearts, or docible Spirits, or have not good Intentions or Ends, *Mark* 4. 14. *Heb.* 4. 2. *Jam.* 4. 3.

And we ought to have an high Esteem of all God's Government, and to think well of all Events that come to pass in it, though we may not perceive the Reasons thereof, *Jer.* 10. 7. We ought not to murmur or repine at any of his Judgments, or Providences; for we may be sure that God knows better what to do than we; we must leave God to govern the World and us, and must not think to prescribe Him his Methods that He should take in the ordering of Things: We must not be peremptory or self-will'd in our own Opinions, or Choice of Things, but must be dumb and silent, and not censure Him in any of his Doings; whatever Condition He chuseth for us, whatever Mercies he denieth us, or Pains, or Losses, or Troubles He inflicts; or though his Mercies come more slowly than we expect, or Afflictions lie on longer; for we may be sure that which He will have is best both for Matter, and Time, and Season, *Eccl.* 3. 11. and that He seeth Cause for such or such Administrations, tho' we do not, and for such or such Delays, and hath wise Ends in all, *Job* 38. 2. and 21. 22. *Eccl.* 7. 23, 24. and 11. 5.

And this may and ought to comfort the Church under all seeming cross Accidents and Events, or when Things seem to go backward, or though never so many Lets and Hindrances start up to put a Stop to any good Design or Enterprize; we may be sure yet, that it is all fit to be as it is, and that God is never at a loss for Means or Ways to accomplish

compleish what He will have done, in his own Time, or to give a Check to his Enemies, and so frustrate all their Devices, by confounding or defeating all their Counsels and Projects; and that He is able easily to turn the Scene of Things, and to counter-work all that hath been done to the Prejudice of His, or his Servants Interest, when He seeth a proper Time for it, *Psal. 33. 10. Prov. 19. 21. Isa. 7. 5, 6, 7. 2 Pet. 2. 9.* Nor is it any Objection at all against the Wisdom of God's Government, that there is so much seeming Disorder or Confusion in the World. But it is really a Wonder that there is no more, if we consider the proud and intemperate Passions, and the various Interest, and the many vicious and corrupt Inclinations of Men, it surely requireth a vast and infinite Mind, to manage all this Universe of Beings, and especially all Mankind, and to keep all here in tolerable Condition in this vicious State of Man. And it is not because it cannot be otherwise, or as if God wanted Wisdom to set Things in a better Posture; but He doth not think fit in this State of Probation, at least as yet, to have it otherwise than it is. He leaves many Evils to bring down the Pride of Men, to try Mens Spirits, and to be the Exercise of their Virtues, and to shew his own Power and Wisdom the more at last, in bringing Order out of Confusion, and to remedy Things when they seem to be in an hopeless State, by his seasonable Interposition, which in a continued Course of Success, would not have been so observable, or taken notice of; as all the extraordinary Works in Nature are not so much observed as one Miracle. By these Things we find Men are often brought to the Consideration of their Ways, to humble themselves for their Sins, to pray more, and to trust in an Arm of Flesh less, to see the

the Weakness of their Powers, and the Insufficiency of their Counsels without the Divine Concurrence; and yet still the Wisdom of God is seen in restraining, over-ruling, or diverting the Wrath and Wickedness of Men, when He doth not by an omnipotent Hand, either presently convert them, or utterly destroy them. Both Wisdom and Might are His, and God will shew both as his Wisdom shall direct.

Q. And is not God also full of Goodness and Beneficence as well as wise and powerful?

A. Yes: This is one eminent Branch of the Divine Perfection: As God hath all Fulness and Excellency in Himself, so He hath a Will and Propension in Himself to diffuse and communicate Good and Benefits to others, Psal. 119. 68. Thou art Good, and dost Good. This benign and beneficent Property is most eminent and glorious in It is this that in Conjunction with his Wisdom and Power, was the Cause of all Things: This was the very ground of his imparting Being to so great a Number and Variety of Beings, which he himself had no need of, having infinite Fulness in and of Himself; so that He had no need of the Assistance or Ministry of any Thing, nor can receive any Thing from any other; but all that Good that is in all the World, is from Him: There is none that can be profitable unto God, Job 22. 2. But the Lord is good unto all, Psal. 145. 9. The Earth is full of his Goodness, Psal. 33. 5. It appears in the Oversight He hath, and the Care that He takes of all his Creatures, and in all that Good that is in the World, which is all from Him, Psal. 149. 16. Acts 17. 27. Mat. 6. 26, 29. Luke 12. 24. Ps. 147. 9. Mat. 10. 29, 30. Job 12. 7. Acts 14. 16. Psal. 40. 5.

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But it appears most eminently, as hereafter is to be shewed, in his great Mercy to Man in his fallen and miserable State, into which we were brought by Sin, notwithstanding our great Ingratitude and Rebellion against him, *Psal.* 130. 7. *Eph.* 2. 4. *Jam.* 5. 11. *Psal.* 119. 156. *Mich.* 7. 18. 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *Psal.* 111. 4. and 103. 8. In which miserable and wretched Estate, because of our great Necessity, He sent his only begotten Son to be a Redeemer and Saviour to us, which is such an Instance of Divine Goodness, that there is no comprehending of, *Rom.* 8. 32. *Job.* 3. 16. 1 *Job.* 4. 8, 9, 10. And hath of his own Free-Grace given us great and precious Promises in him, of the greatest good Things, of Pardon and Life eternal, and everlasting Enjoyment of himself, upon our coming up to the proper Preparations for it; for the enabling us to which, we have also the Offer and Promise of his Spirit, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. 4. *Ezek.* 18. 21. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Mich.* 7. 18. *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. 1 *Job.* 5. 11, 12. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. 1 *Cor.* 6. 16, 18. 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. *Psal.* 84. 11. 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.

He is good even in his Commands which we are most apt to grudge at, which He hath given us for the Rule of our Actions. Though we are apt to think these an hard Yoak, yet they are every way good for us, and all his Government over us is good, *Rom.* 7. 12. *Deut.* 6. 24. and 5. 29. *Mich.* 6. 8. And because there is such a Necessity of our Conversion and Turning to Him, even in the very Nature of the Thing, to make us happy, He therefore useth the most earnest Importunity to this End; by Officers that He sends on purpose to beseech us to be reconciled, and sometimes assures us by an Oath, That he doth not delight in the Death of a Sinner, *Ezek.* 33. 11. and 18. 31, 32. 2 *Pet.*

3: 9. 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Isa.* 1. 18. and 55. 2. *Mat.* 23. 37.

Yea, the Goodness of God appears in the very Afflictions which we think so hardly of, they having a merciful Design in them to promote our truest Welfare, *Lam.* 3. 33. *For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men,* 1 Pet. 1. 6. It is only, if need be, that we are in Heaviness thro' manifold Temptations. It is to prevent, or purge out Sin, *Isa.* 27. 9. *Psal.* 119. 67. and 30. 6, 7. *Deut.* 32. 15. *Luke* 15. 17, 18. *Jer.* 31. 18. *Isa.* 48. 10. It is to refine us, and quicken us, to drive us to God, and to make us more devout in Prayer, and more watchful and more holy, *Heb.* 12. 6, 9, 10. *Isa.* 26. 16. *Hos.* 5. 15. *Job.* 15. 2. *Prov.* 29. 15. *Mich.* 6. 9. *Psal.* 119. 71, 75.

It is seen in his Patience towards us, before He executes Punishment, which He therefore useth Means to prevent, by his earnest Exhortations and Expostulations to return to Him, that there may not be need of the Execution of his Judgments, *Jer.* 26. 2, 3. *Isa.* 28. 21. And He is commonly very slow in his Executions, bearing with Sinners with much Long-suffering, to give them Time to repent, *Rom.* 9. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 20. *Acts* 13. 18. *Rom.* 2. 4. And his usual way is to give Warning of the approaching Judgments before He sends them, if at last they may be roused up thereby to repent and amend their Ways, that thereby there may be a Stop put to the Execution; as He did to the old World by *Noah*; to the People of the *Jews* by many Prophets, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15. and by the Judgment upon the ten Tribes first, *Ezek.* 23 31. and to *Nineveh* by *Jonah*, which accordingly had its Effect for a Time. And when He goeth about this Work, He so expresseth himself as if He did it with Reluctance, *Hos.* 11. 8, 9. *Jer.* 44. 22. And when

when He doth proceed to Judgment, He usually begins with lesser Stroaks first, to see what they will do, *Amos* 4. 12. *Lev.* 14. 40, &c. and at last He punisheth less than the Merit of Mens Sins, *Psal.* 103. 10. *Ezr.* 9. 13. *Psal.* 78. 38. and is ready and easie to forgive, and to take off his Hand again as soon as there are any Signs of Repentance, *Jer.* 3. 5, 12. and 18. 7. *2 Sam.* 24. 16, 17. And sometimes when there hath been only an outward and partial Repentance, it hath put a Stop for a while, *1 Kings* 21. 28. When He proceeds to utter Destruction, it is from the meer Necessity of Government, and for the common Good of the World, that others may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly, *Isa.* 26. 9, 11.

Q. What are we to learn from this?

A. It is this that doth give us the most lovely Idea of the Divine Nature, when it is consider'd together with his Holiness; and that layeth the Foundation for a true and genuine Religion and Devotion to Him, which is damp'd by a superstitious Dread of the Divine Majesty, as of a Being only arm'd with Vengeance, and cloathed with Thunder, formidable in his Power, and watching all Opportunities to do us harm; from whence are apt to arise only some dull and melancholy Humiliations and crouching Services as to a terrible Sovereign. All His other Attributes considered without this, and without that Holiness which is the universal Rectitude of His Nature and Will, being apt to affright and terrifie; for without this, His omnipotent Power would seem only an omnipotent Evil; and therefore this is the Name that God doth most glory in, as the Top and Perfection of His other Exoellencies, and which doth represent Him to us, as the most adorable and amiable Being, *Exod.* 33. 19. and 34. 6, 7. Therefore

therefore this should stir up in us most admiring Thoughts of God, and should engage our Affections, and draw out our Love to Him ; And tho' we cannot love Him at last, proportionably to his Goodness, having such narrow Affections, yet we must love Him above all, *Mat.* 10. 37. and 22. 37. 1 *Job.* 2. 15. *Psal.* 31. 23. and 116. 1. 1 *Job.* 4. 19.

And it should be Matter of our daily Praises, not that thereby any Benefit can come to God, but it is a just Debt that is due from us to kind and generous Benefactors, as God is above all, and that which the Kindness and Benefits that are conferr'd upon us do rightly call for. And therefore when we cast about our Eyes, and behold the vast Communication of Goodness that is all over the Creation ; when we contemplate in our Minds the great Grace of God, especially in the Covenant of Grace, and in his Son Christ Jesus ; and when we call to mind what we have already received, and what we have in hope by his Promise, and that all this is meer, free, and undeserved Goodness, this would make our Hearts and Lives flow out with Praises, so that we should make it one great Part of all our Devotion, and we should find the Comfort and Benefit of it in our own Spirits, *Psal.* 118. 1. and 107. 8. and 147. 1. and 144. 2. *Isa.* 1. 3. *Gen.* 32. 10. 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. *Psal.* 67. 5.

This should also engage and encourage us to Prayer, and to come to God with humble Confidence, for the Supply of our Wants out of the infinite Treasury of his Goodness, *Luke* 11. 11, 12, 13. *Ezra* 8. 22. though perhaps we often prayed, and yet have not had the Supplies that we have prayed for ; either because we have lived in Sin, and our Sins have provoked Him to withhold good

good Things from us, *Job*. 9. 31. *Isa*. 59. 1, 2. *Ezek*. 14. 3. *1 Pet*. 3. 12. Or we may have a sick and greedy Appetite after good Things here which are not fit for us, and are therefore better denied than granted; or we ask we know not what, or to no good End, and God knoweth the Deceit and Hypocrisie of our Hearts, *Jam*. 4. 3. or if we have not the same, we may have an equivalent, or what is better, *2 Cor*. 12. 8, 9. *Heb*. 5. 7. or it may be God will have us to wait longer to prepare us the more for Mercy, *Luke* 18. 1. It is most certainly not from the want of Goodness in God that we are not answered, but for some other Cause; and therefore this should make us stay ourselves upon God in all our Distresses, provided we regulate our Hope and Trust by the Promises, and by the Word and Wisdom of God, and refer both the Matter and the Time of Contrivance all to Him, *Isa*. 26. 3. *Nab*. 1. 7. *Psal*. 37. 3, 4. and 125. 1, 4. *Lam*. 3. 24, 25, 26.

And it should engage us to a patient and chearful Submission of ourselves to His Will, whatever the Events may be; because we have receiv'd so much Good from God already, and we know that He still seeks our Good; and when He inflicts Evil, that it is designed either to prevent worse of another kind, or it may be too, worse of the same kind; therefore we should always acquiesce in God's Government, *Job* 2. 10. *Lam*. 3. 38, 39. *Acts* 21. 14. *Psal*. 73. 1. *Prov*. 25. 15. *1 Cor*. 11. 20. *Eccl*. 6. 12.

Hereby also we may see the Folly of preferring any Creatures above God, when it is He that is the chief Good and the Fountain of all Good; when they derive all their Being and Good from Him, and are a variable, little, dependant Good, and can do but little for us; whereas God

is

is an infinite Ocean of all Blessedness and Good. It must needs be great Folly to leave original, essential, and All-sufficient Fulness, for that which is so infinitely short of it, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. *Psal.* 73. 25, 26, 27. *Isa* 40. 6, 7, 8. and 2. 22. *1 Pet.* 1. 24, 25. We should therefore chuse and delight in God, as our only Portion and Happiness; that can satisfie our Souls abundantly, that can fill up all our Capacities, and is every way suitable to us, and will be so for ever, *Psal.* 36. 7, 8, 9. and 27. 4. and 65. 4. and 33. 12. and 144. 15. *2 Pet.* 1. 2. *Psal.* 17. 15. And we should use all Means to get an Interest in his everlasting Favour and Love; which must be by labouring to be holy and like unto Him, *Job.* 14. 21. and *1 Job.* 6, 7. *Amos* 3. 3. *2 Cor.* 6. 14. For though God is good unto all, yet He is especially good to those that fear Him and keep his Commandments, *2 Chron.* 16. 9. *Psal.* 11. 7. and 84. 11. *Lam.* 3. 25. *2 Tim.* 2. 19.

And now by this we may see the unspeakable Folly and Evil of Sin, and should be moved by this as the most just and powerful Argument to Repentance, and that of the most excellent kind. For if nothing is so good as God, and He be so full of Bounty and Kindness to us, nothing can be so evil as Sin; that is most contrary to Him, and is the greatest Contempt of, and Affront to His Wisdom and Goodness. God is not an envious or unjust, or a cruel Being that seeks our Harm, that we should be thereby moved to slip his Yoak from off our Necks; but He is one that hath every way obliged us by innumerable Acts of Kindness and Beneficence to us; and therefore to sin against Him is the highest Baseness and Unworthiness; it is nothing but meer Self-willedness and Lust, without any Reason or Wit, *Mich.* 6. 2, 3. *Deut.* 32. 6. *2 Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9. *Rom.* 2. 4. If we abuse

His Goodness, by taking Encouragement thereby to continue in Sin, we do but *heap to ourselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. For as God hath the Bowels of a Father, so He hath the Wisdom and Justice of a wise and righteous Governour; so that His Goodness is not an injudicious Fondness, nor His Mercy a foolish Pity. Therefore as we must not cherish wrong Notions of God to exclude his Goodness; so neither must we separate his Goodness from his Wisdom, and Holiness and Love to Justice, *Psal. 68. 19, 20, 21. Nabum 1. 2; 3. Deut. 7. 9, 10. Exod. 34. 6, 7.* Hereby we should be engaged then to render unto God a most chearful and ready Obedience, and to please Him in all Things. This should be the powerful Effect of all His Mercies to us, *Rom. 12. 1, 2. Exod. 20. 2. Deut. 32. 6, 7, 18. 1 Sam. 12. 24. Deut. 10. 12, 13.*

And seeing God is so full of Goodness, and gives so many Demonstrations of it here to such unworthy and rebellious Creatures, we may be sure that this is a great Excellency of Spirit, and therefore we should be excited hereby to imitate God in his Goodness, according to our Capacities, and should look upon it as our Work and our Excellency to be doing of Good; we should not be ill-natur'd or envious, or spiteful or cruel, but we should love to do Good, and that even to Enemies, and thereby shew ourselves to be the true Followers of God, *Mat. 5. 44, &c. Eph. 4. 32. and 5. 1, 2. Gal. 6. 10. Prov. 11. 23.*

If we be Followers of God here, we may hope for the perfect Vision and Enjoyment of Him hereafter; when for our Encouragement thereunto, his Goodness will be more abundantly manifested to us; for if God be so good here to Sinners upon Earth, we may thence conclude that He will be
much

much more so to his Saints in Heaven: If so much Good be done to them here upon the Footstool, there will be much more done upon the Throne; and if there be so much Goodness shewed to all, whilst Good and Bad are mix'd together, How much more shall there be at last, when the Good shall be by themselves separated from all the wicked Herd, that they may have the singular Manifestations of the Divine Goodness to them, when they being made perfect in themselves, shall be fully receptive thereof, which here they are not, having their Vessels too narrow for such glorious Communications, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12. 1 Job. 3. 2. Ps. 16. 11. and 17. 15. And hence it may be infer'd that that Path, which is the Entrance into this State to good Men, is not such a formidable Evil as fearful Imagination is apt to represent it, Phil. 1. 23. And some Pains and Troubles also may well be born here for a while, under the Government of a good God, when there will be so much Goodness at last to make up all, Psal. 126. 5, 6. Rev. 21. 4. Rom 8. 18.

Q. Doth this Almighty, All-wise, and good God, that made the World, also govern the World then, and exercise a continual Providence over it?

A. Yes: For it is not to be imagin'd, that this All-wise, most Powerful, and most Benign Being, who gave Being to all Things else, and made all Things for wise and good Ends, as all wise and intelligent Agents do, should presently desert and abandon what he had made, and take no more Care whether the End he propos'd be attained or no: But it is most reasonable to conclude, That He doth still inspect, preside over, and govern all his Creatures, and all their Morions and Actions whatsoever, according to their several Natures and Kinds, their Needs or Exigencies, as may most

tend to the promoting of his own Glory, the Good of the Universe, and particularly of Mankind ; and amongst Men, those that are His peculiar People, that stand in the nearest Relation to Him by special Covenant, Adoption and Regeneration, whom He takes upon Himself a more special Care of. And so the Scripture informs us, That though God is so exceeding high, and lifted up in His own glorious Majesty, yet He doth not disdain to look down upon any of his Creatures that He hath a Respect to, and governs them all, *He humbleth himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven and in the Earth*, Psal. 113. 6. *He preserveth them*, Neh. 9. 6. *He upholdeth all Things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. 1. 3. *And his Kingdom ruleth over all*, Psal. 103. 19. Nor is all this any Distraction or Difficulty to Him whose Power and Wisdom is infinite.

Thus He preserveth the Order, and governs the Motions of all the Heavenly Bodies, and of all the Parts of Matter throughout the whole Universe : Matter itself not having Motion essential to it, much less a regular and orderly Motion, and in such variety, but what must come from a wise and intelligent Mover, and can continue no longer than his Force or Power abides upon it, and still repairs and maintains it, either by his own immediate Agency, or by certain Sub-agents that he hath appointed hereunto ; so that whatsoever Law of Motion is impress'd upon any Thing, it is still from Him and continued by Him ; and whatever Concatenation of Causes and Effects there may be, and constant Action and Re-action, jogging and working of one Part or Principle upon another, He is the first Mover, Superintendent, and Manager of all. And therefore all the Motions and Influences of the Creatures are always ascribed to Him, as we find it is with respect to the heavenly

venly Bodies themselves, *Mat. 5. 45. He maketh his Sun to rise, Judges 5. 20. He made the Stars in their Courses fight against Sisora, Job 38. He commandeth the Morning, and maketh the Day spring to know his place. He bindeth up the sweet Influences of Pleiades, and looseth the Bands of Orion, and brings forth Mazzaroth in his Season, and guideth Arcturus with his Sons, And He stops their Course and orders their Motions as He pleaseth, Josh. 10. 13. Isa. 38. 8. and 40. 22, 26. So that it is meer Prophaneness to thank the Stars for any Good we receive, when they are all at God's Command, nor must we fear them, but God, Jer. 10. 2. Isa. 44. 24, 25. nor yet trust in them, Isa. 47. 12, 13.*

And thus God exerciseth a Government in like manner over the Air and Winds, and Meteors, Rain and Hail, Snow and Vapours, to raise them, and dispose of them and of their Motions, and to order what Events seem good to Him thereby. This is noted particularly of the Wind, which is God's great Instrument with which He doth many great Things, and brings many great Events to pass. *Psal. 18. 10. He did flee upon the Wings of the Wind. Prov. 30. 4. He hath gathered the Winds in his Fists. Psal. 147. 18. He causeth his Wind to blow, and the Waters flow. Psal. 148. 8. Stormy Winds fulfilling his Word. Nah. 1. 3. The Lord hath his Way in the Whirlwind and in the Storm. Gen. 18. 1. Exod. 10. 19. and 14. 21. and 15. 10. Mat. 8. 26. Psal. 107. 23.*

This is likewise observed of the Clouds and Rain, which God raiseth and turneth about as He pleaseth, by Means of the Winds. *Psal. 135. 6, 7. He causeth the Vapours to ascend from the Ends of the Earth, He maketh Lightnings for the Rain, and bringeth the Wind out of his Treasury. Psal. 104. He maketh the Clouds his Chariot. Job 37. 12. The Ballancings of the Clouds are his wondrous Work. Psal. 147. 8. He co-*

vereth the Heavens with Clouds, and prepareth Rain for the Earth, Jer. 14. 22. Amos 4. 7. He maketh it to rain on one City and not on another, Job 36. 24. and 5. 9, 10. Lev. 26. 4. Mat. 5. 45. Deut. 11. 17. Prov. 28. 3. And so for Thunder, Job 37. 5. He thundereth with the Voice of his Excellency. And for Frost and Snow, Psal. 147. 16. He giveth Snow like Wool, and scattereth the hoary Frost like Ashes, Psal. 148. 8. We must therefore look upon none of these Things to come to pass, but by God's Order and Direction, and must come to Him when we want the Benefit of these Things, Jam. 5. 18. Amos 5. 8. And when they are withheld, we must take it to be his Judgment, Deut. 28. 23, 24. or when they are in Excess, Ezek. 38. 22. Prov. 28. 3.

Such a Government also God hath over the Waters of the great Deep, and over Fountains and Rivers, Gen. 1. 10. Psal. 33. 7. Job 38. 8, 9, 10. Exod. 14. 21. Job 9. 8. Psal. 29. 10. and 65. 7. Mat. 8. 26. Psal. 93. 3, 4. and 104. 10, 11, 12, 13. and 89. 7, 8, 9. Isa. 50. 2, 3. And so also over the Earth, and all that groweth upon it, to move and shake it with Earthquakes, to make it fruitful, to bless the Labour of the Husbandman, or to make it barren. Psal. 104. 14. He causeth the Grass to grow for the Cattle. Mat. 6. 30. He cloatheth the Grass of the Field. Psal. 65. 9, 10, 11. and 33. 5. Acts 14. 17. Deut. 11. 13, 14, 15. Lev. 26. 3. Hos. 2. 21, 22. Psal. 107. 33, 34. Lev. 26. 10, 20. Psal. 78. 46. Amos 4. 9. 1 Sam. 12. 17. Deut. 28. 24. This should make the Husbandman till the Ground, and plow and Sow with Prayer and Dependence upon God, Amos 5. 4. In a Time of Scarcity we should take notice of it, as God's Hand, Psal. 46. 10. and labour to engage God to us, that we may have Plenty, Psal. 67. 5, 6. and 85. 12, 13. and receive all with Thankfulness, and let Him have the Honour

nour of his Gifts, *Pfal. 33. 1, 5. Prov. 3. 9, 10. Dent. 28. 2, 10. 1 Pea. 4. 10.*

Thus also God doth exercise a Government over every creeping Thing that moves on the Earth, over the Beasts of the Field, over the Fowls of the Air, and the Fish of the Sea, and whatsoever passeth through the Paths of the Seas, *Acts. 17. 25. He giveth unto all Life and Breath, and all Things. Job 12. 10. In his Hand is the Soul of every living Thing.* He forms them, and brings them forth; He preserveth their Kinds and Generations in those that seem to be less able to keep themselves. *He maketh the Hinds to Calve, Psal. 29. 9. And the wild Goats of the Rock to bring forth, and to cast out their Sorrows Job 39. 1. And taketh Care of the Young-ones of the Ostrich, ver. 13, 14. And He provides Food for all; The Fowls of the Air our heavenly Father feedeth them, Mat. 6. 26. Job 38. 41. He feedeth the young Ravens that cry, Psal. 147. 9. The Eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their Meat in due Season, Psal. 145. 15. That thou givest them, they gather; thou openest thine Hand, and they are filled with Good.* Tho' He hath endued them with several Instincts, and made some much more sagacious than others, as the Ant and the Bee to lay up Stores for themselves; and thus He protects and looks after them, and provides them Refuge, or endues them with Instincts to avoid and flee from Dangers, by planting Fear or Caution in them, and enduing some with Quickness of Motion, or otherwise takes Care of them. So that *not a Sparrow shall fall to the Ground without our Father, Mat. 10. 29. Psal. 104. 17, 18.*

And thus we find also, that He governs the Motions and Actions of all his Creatures, and all Events that come to pass by their Means; sometimes by way of Punishment upon Transgressors

as He sometimes useth the wild Beasts and Insects, Flies and Worms, to be a Scourge to Men, *Lev.* 26. 22. *Ezek.* 14. 21. As He sent a Lion to the young Prophet, *1 Kings* 13. 24. two She-Bears to devour the Children that laugh'd at *Elisha*, *2 Kings* 2. 24. And Lions upon the strange Nations that inhabited *Samaria*, *2 Kings* 17. 25. Lice and Frogs, and other Insects upon the *Egyptians*, and so upon the People of *Israel*, *Joel* 2. 2, 6, &c. He spake, and the Locusts came, and Caterpillars innumerable, *Psal.* 105. 34. Sometimes in a way of Mercy. As the Ravens, those rapacious and greedy Birds, to bring Meat to *Elijah*, *1 Kings* 17. 6. A Fish to swallow up *Jonah*, to save him from perishing in the Waters, *Jonah* 2. 1. As Christ ordered the Fishes to come in Shoals into the Disciples Net; and another to come with the Tribute Money in his Mouth, *Mat.* 17. 27. Thus God shut the Mouths of the Lions, *Dan.* 6. 22. Tho' the Creatures are innumerable and of diverse Kinds, and some of them seemingly contemptible and of little Use, yet such is the infinite Wisdom, and Power and Goodness of God, that He looks after them all.

Which sheweth us what Cause we have to fear such a mighty God, and so also to trust in Him, who is the Lord of such an Host, and hath so many Creatures at his Command, and can either by Himself or them, so many ways either help or punish us. But not to fear any Evil from any of the Creatures themselves, who have no Power to act but by Commission, no nor from Men or Devils, *Mat.* 10. 28. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Exod.* 11. 7. So neither are we to trust in any of the Creatures; because of themselves they can do us no Good, but under God's Direction and Government, *Isa.* 33. 17. *Mat.* 4. 4. *Isa.* 41. 23. But for any Events of Good or Evil that come to us, by any of the Creatures, we must

must look above the Creatures to God who ordets all, *Deut.* 19. 5.

Q. But doth not God exercise a more special Government over Man?

A. Yes: For He hath made Man the most noble of all the visible Creatures, and they were all made more or less for Man's Use, *Psal.* 8. *1 Cor.* 9. 9. *Mat.* 6. 26. and 10. 29, 30, 31. So that Mankind especially is the great Subject of God's Rule and Government. He doth exercise a Rule and Government over Man, even in his very Formation and Pirth, ordering his Shape and Parts, how he shall be figured, modell'd, or compounded; all which is done in a most wonderful manner, too high for us to understand, *Eccl.* 11. 5. *Job* 10. 8, &c *Psal.* 139. 13, 14, 15, 16. And so in like manner, our Souls are His, *Zech.* 12. 1. *Heb.* 12. 9. So that all our Life and Being is from Him, and every Circumstance relating thereunto depends upon his Disposal, *Eccl.* 3. 2. *Psal.* 36. 9 and 71. 6. *Isa.* 66. 9. *Acts* 17. 25. *Job.* 9. 2, 3.

So that from hence it appeareth, That God hath a special Propriety in us, and hath a Right to dispose of us, and to take away what he hath given in his own Time, and at his own Pleasure, *1 Sam.* 3. 18. And hath a most exact Knowledge of us, of every Part, and every Motion, *Psal.* 139. 1, &c. and 94. 9. And hence therefore we are instructed to praise God for our Beings and Births, and all the favourable Circumstances thereof, *Psal.* 139. 14. and to be contented with the Form, Manner, and Circumstances of our Births and Beings, whether they be more or less honourable or beautiful, &c. *Isa.* 45. 9. *Job* 33. 12, 13. *Heb.* 12. 9. And to devote all our Lives, and Strength, and Powers to his Service, and to no other, *Jer.* 2. 27. *Deut.* 32. 18. *Eccl.* 12. 1. *Psal.* 119. 73. to apply ourselves

to God with an holy Trust in his Goodness, and to plead with Him for good from our being his Creatures. This Argument those may use that have not yet the Spirit of Adoption; they may come to God as their Creator, but then it must be with a Supposition, that they are willing to return to Him, and do not continue in their Obstinacy and Sin, *Psal.* 71. 5, 6, 9. and 22, 10, 11. and 128. 8. Hereby we are taught to look upon Children as God's Gift, and when they are either with-held or removed, that it is his Doing, *Psal.* 127. 3. *Gen.* 32. 9. *Psal.* 113. 9. *Gen.* 30. 2. *Job* 1. 21. For they are God's, and He hath the greatest Propriety in them: And when He gives them, we must therefore devote them to God, and labour so to instruct them, that they may live to his Honour, *1 Sam.* 1. 28. *Prov.* 10. 1. and 15. 20.

Thus also God doth exercise a Rule and Government over Man in his Life to preserve it, to order all Events, of Good or Evil with respect to it, and to direct the Actions of it. It is He that preserveth the Life of Man. *He holdeth our Soul in Life*, *Psal.* 66. 9. *He is our Life, and the Length of our Days*, *Dent.* 30. 20. *He keepeth all our Bones*, *Psal.* 34. 20. *The very Hairs of our Head are numbered*, *Mat.* 10. 30. The Means of Life are from Him, and all sorts of Provisions that is necessary for us. *He giveth us fruitful Seasons, and filleth our Hearts with Food and Gladness*, *Acts* 14. 17. *Gen.* 48. 15. *Psal.* 104. 14, 15. and 78. 18, 19, 20. And his Blessing makes the Means effectual, *Mat.* 4. 4. *Psal.* 132. 15. And He wards off Evils from us, *Job* 10. 12. *Isa.* 46. 3, 4. We should therefore acknowledge God in all our Ways, and commit ourselves to Him in all Dangers and Difficulties, and Pressures, remembering that we are always under the Care of a watchful Providence, and that nothing can befall us

us but by order thereof, *Psal.* 31. 5, 14, 15. and 40. 12, 13. and 71. 3, 4, 5, 6. and 121. 1, &c. But then we must labour to be such, as that we may comfortably and believably expect God's Preservation and care, that we be always in God's Way, else we forfeit all, *Psal.* 97. 10, 11, 12. 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Psal.* 82. 2, 3.

All Events of Life are also under God's Rule and Government; all our Peace, Comfort and Prosperity, and all the Means, Methods, and Manner of the Conveiance thereof, tho' procured by others Kindness, or by Means of our own Skill, and Care and Pains, *Psal.* 86. 17. and 29. 11. and 94. 19. *Ecc.* 2. 24. 2 *Cor.* 7. 6. Therefore we must acknowledge God in all, and be thankful to Him, *Psal.* 145. 1, 2, 3, 9, 10. 2 *Cor.* 11. 3, 4. And live by Faith upon God, and quietly wait upon Him for all necessary Provision, *Hab.* 2. 4. And not envy others their Share of Good, *Mat.* 20. 15.

And all our Pains, Wants, Afflictions, and Distresses are under the Divine Government, whatsoever the Means be that bring them on; though this doth not excuse evil Men's Acts, nor our own Folly in procuring the same to ourselves, which comes to pass by way of Judgment, through God's leaving them or us to their or our foolish Counsels and Passions, as a Punishment for other Sins, and sometimes in a way of Mercy to prevent worse, *Job.* 5. 6, 7. *Lam.* 3. 38. *Amos.* 3. 6. *Isa.* 45. 7. *Psal.* 66. 10, 11. *Job.* 1. 20, 21, 22. *Gen.* 45. 5, 8. 2 *Sam.* 16. 10, 11. *Acts.* 2. 23. Thus God governs the Time of Afflictions, *Job.* 7. 30. *Luke.* 13. 31, 32. and 22. 53. The Measures and Degrees of them, so that they shall never be over-measured to good Men, *Isa.* 27. 8. *Jer.* 30. 11. *Isa.* 65. 7. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9. And the Length and Duration of them,

them, *1 Pet.* 1. 6. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Psal.* 105. 19. *2 Pet.* 2. 9. which teacheth us to be patient and submissive, because God is our Sovereign, free, wise, powerful, gracious; and Patience will make our Burden lighter, and most commonly shorten it, *Job.* 18. 11. *Job.* 1. 2 *Sam.* 16. 11. *Psal.* 39. 9. and 22. 1, 2, 3. and to improve Afflictions to the right End, *Eccl.* 7. 14. *Isa.* 27. 9. *Heb.* 12. 10. *Job.* 36. 9, 10, 11. And if we will have them removed, we must pray, *Jam.* 5. 13. but never use ill means to get out of them, as *Saul* did, *1 Sam.* 28. 7, 8. never insult over the Afflicted, *Prov.* 22. 22. *Job.* 6. 14. *Lam.* 1. 12. *Obad.* 12. And when Affliction is removed, whatever be the means, give God the Praise, *Psal.* 59. 15. and 71. 20. *Gen.* 35. 2.

Thus God hath a Government over all Kinds of Events; as our Health and Sicknes, whether it seems to arise from natural Causes, or from outward Accidents, *Deut.* 32. 39. *1 Sam.* 2. 6. *Psal.* 42. 11. *Acts* 17. 25, 28. *Psal.* 104. 29, 30. *Deut.* 28. 22, 27. *Job.* 1. and 2. *2 Sam.* 12. 15. *Isa.* 38. 12, *2 Kings* 5. 7. Therefore we must improve Health to God's Glory, and serve Him in Health, and not put it off till Sicknes, *Mat.* 22. 37. *Luke* 13. 7. And should be patient under Sicknes, *Psal.* 39. 9. and not fancy the worst, but be still and wait upon God, and cast off distracting Fears and Imaginations, seeing the Nature, Kind, Time, Stint and Measure are all from God over-ruling the same, which our Fancies or Fears have no Influence upon. But when Sicknes comes, be sure to make a right Use of it, by examining ourselves and exercising Repentance, and entring upon a better Course, and seek God for the Removal, *Psal.* 39. 10. *Jer.* 17. 14. *2 Chron.* 16. 12. *2 Kings* 1, 2. Physick and Means and Prayer should go together; and when it is removed, remember and pay our Vows, give God the

the Praise, and take heed of Security and Backsliding, *Job.* 8. 14. *Luke* 17. 17. 2 *Kings* 5. 17. 2 *Chron.* 32. 25.

Thus it is for Success in Business and thriving in the World, and getting of Wealth, and so for Disappointments, Crosses, Decays in Estate, Poverty. We must not impute to Man's own Skill, to Accidents or Chance, but must look above all to God, *Eccl.* 9. 11. *Deut.* 8. 13, 17, 18. *Eccl.* 5. 19. *Gen.* 24. 1, 35. and 17. 20. and 21. 13, 14, 20. and 26. 12, 13, 14. and 32. 10. and 33. 11. and 39. 1, 2, 1 *Sam.* 2. 7, 8. 1 *Chron.* 29. 11. *Prov.* 10. 22. and 22. 2. *Psal.* 127. 1, 2. *Josh.* 24. 4. *Gen.* 31. 16. *Dan.* 15. 11. This is not to encourage Sloth, or to discourage Labour and Skill, which are the usual Means with God's Blessing, for the obtaining of Good, *Prov.* 10. 4, 5. and 6. 9, 10, 11. But we must not trust in ourselves or Means, but seek God's Blessing with humble Submission, *Prov.* 3. 6. and 16. 3. *Gen.* 24. 12. *Prov.* 16. 20. and 20. 24. *Isa.* 28. 29. *Jam.* 4. 13, 14. and must wait and be contented to have it in God's Way, *Psal.* 37. 3, 4. *Prov.* 4. 25, 26, 27. *Hab.* 2. 9. *Jer.* 22. 13. and 17. 11. *Prov.* 20, 21. And in God's Time, without turning aside to any crooked Path, tho' it may seem of never so favourable Advantage to us, *Isa.* 60. 22. *Psal.* 102. 13. We must not go to catch the Matter out of God's Hands, tho' He may seem to be slow in his Motions, *Isa.* 28. 16. *Gen.* 16. 2, 4. And if we want Riches, we must be contented too, and not think to extort them out of God's Hands by Impatience and Fretting, *Heb.* 13. 15, 16. And if we have Riches, make a right use of them, and not abuse them to Luxury or Intemperance, *Rom.* 13. 13. *Eph.* 5. 13. nor trust in them, *Luke* 12. 17, 18. 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. *Psal.* 62. 8, 9, 10. nor be proud or high-minded with them, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. But use all
to

to God's Honour and our Neighbour's Good, in such Ways as may do most Service, *Prov.* 3. 9. especially in promoting the Worship of God and Reformation of Manners, and comforting the Poor, *Prov.* 17. 15. and 14. 31. *1 Tim.* 6. 18. *Prov.* 22. 22. *Psal.* 35. 10. and 12. 5. but always prefer God above them, and chuse Him for our Portion, who hath the Power over all and is better than all, *Psal.* 144. 1, 2, 15. and 4. 6. *Jer.* 9. 23. *1 Tim.* 6. 17. *Psal.* 73. 25.

Thus it is also for Favour from Men, *Prov.* 29. 26. and 21. 1. *Gen.* 39. 21. *Acts* 7. 10. *Exod.* 3. 21. *Dan.* 1. 9. For notwithstanding all the Skill or Art of Address, there may be Neglect or Forgetfulness, or some Obstacle to prevent, *Prov.* 16. 1. *Job* 10. 12. So it is for Honour and Friendship, the Fruit of such Favour, *Job* 36. 22. *1 Chron.* 29. 12. *1 Sam.* 2. 8. *Psal.* 75. 6, 7. *Dan.* 2. 21. and 4. 25. *Psal.* 39. 17, 18. *Gen.* 40. 23. *Numb.* 24. 11. *Esth.* 6. 3. *Prov.* 19. 21. *Lam.* 3. 37. *Job* 23. 13. Then it followeth, when any one is advanced, or depressed, there is an End in it, and it is someway best, either in a way of Mercy or Judgment, *Prov.* 11. 10, 11. and 28. 12. and 29. 2. And Men shall have Honour and Favour, when it pleaseth God, whatever Obstacles or Difficulties are in the Way. But therefore we should never commit any Sin to ingratiate ourselves into any Man's Favour, or by vile Flatteries and wicked Turns to procure their Respect, but stick close and resolutely to Duty, whatever be the Event, *Prov.* 16. 7. and 11. 6, 7, 27. and 28. 23. and 3. 3, 4. *Psal.* 37. 5, 6.

We are always to observe that all Events whatsoever are subject to the Divine Disposal, whether they shall be or not be; so that a Man cannot so much as foresee what the Event of such or such a Design, or of such or such an Action will be, *Lam.*

3. 37. *Prov.* 16. 9. and 20. 24. and therefore there is just matter of Reproof to those Men that are proud and resolute in their Doings, that are boasting and confident in the Expectation of such or such Successes that shall follow upon such or such Counsels or Projects, without looking up to God in any Thing they do; whereas in all Cases we should ever seek God's Guidance and Blessing. For if He will hinder, or not prosper and bless, all our Projects, Purposes, and Endeavours are vain. 'Tis in vain for us to be confident in ourselves, or to depend upon an Arm of Flesh, or to put our Trust in Man, or to trust in our own Counsels, Power, or Skill, or in the Activity, Friendship, or Help of others. But we must always see first that the Cause and Matter be good, and then use the Means and seek to God; so that our Life should be a Life of Prayer and Dependance upon God, especially in every special Case or Enterprize that we have in hand; and we should say, *If the Lord will, I will do this or that*, *Jam.* 4. 15. If it be but to take a Journey, *If the Lord will*, *1 Cor.* 4. 19. *Rom.* 1. 10. *1 Thess.* 3. 10. This hath been always the Manner of good Men; thus *Abraham* did when he sent his Servant to fetch a Wife for his Son, *Gen.* 24. 7. So the Servant himself that he might have his way prosperous, *ver.* 12. and 21. So *Jacob* when he took his Journey to *Padan Aran*, *Gen.* 28. 20. So *David* always, so *Jehosaphat*, *Hezekiab*, *Daniel*; and so *Ezra* in his Journey to *Jerusalem*, *Ezra* 8. 21, 22. so also *Nehem.* 1. 4, 7. And thus we have the general Direction in all Cases, *Psal.* 37. 5.

Q. But doth God exercise a Government also over the Actions of Men?

A. Yes: For if there were not a Government of Mens Actions, there could not be a Government of Events that depend upon those Actions. But yet the

the Government of God over Men is not like the Government over other Creatures ; those that are inanimate, and that consist of meer Matter, being governed according to such Laws of Motion as were fix'd and determin'd at first, in a Dependance of one upon another ; from which Order we find that God doth very rarely recede, except He would by signal Interposition of Providence, varying from the general Course of Things, awaken the dull Spirits of Men to a Consideration of his Power, and would engage Men to a diligent Attention thereupon for wise and holy Ends. And all sensitive Beings are determin'd to some certain Acts as are within the Compaſs of Sense or Imagination only. But Man was endued with a more capacious Understanding, and a Power of Deliberation and Choice, and Liberty of Action, under the Direction of a moral Law, according to which he is to steer his Course, and is to be rewarded or punish'd accordingly as he doth, or doth not do so. So that Man was made a self-determining Agent, and God observeth what his Carriage is, and will proceed with him according to his Obedience to, or Transgression of his Laws, which should make us carefully look to ourselves that we labour to acquit ourselves well in all our Performances, *Prov. 15. 3.*

But yet we find in this fallen State which we are in by the Sin of our first Parents, tho' the Nature of Man be the same in respect of its essential Constitution and Faculties, yet there is now a moral Inability in him to think, to act, or speak that which is right and good thoroughly without the Divine Assistance, *2 Cor. 3. 5. Jam. 1. 17, 18. Phil. 4. 13. Acts 11. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Gal. 5. 22.* Which should therefore engage us always to Prayer and Dependance upon God for his Grace to prevent us in all our Doings, and further us with his Help,

Help, *2 Thess.* 1. 11, 12. *Eph.* 1. 16, 17. But yet this Assistance is not to exclude our Endeavours or the use of Means, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13.

And there is no less need of a Government over all the sinful Actions of Men, tho' Men are left to themselves and to the use of their own Liberty in some things, without interposing any Impediment to prevent the same; yet that in others there may be a stop put to the violence and fury of their Proceedings, which God is able to do innumerable ways: Or that they may be diverted or turned another way, or directed to other Purposes, than they may themselves intend, *Gen.* 45. 8. *Ezek.* 21. 19. *1 Sam.* 19. 11, 12. *Gen.* 31. 24---29.

And tho' God may leave Men to the use of their own natural Powers, to determine themselves, with an intire Freedom in lesser things, and such as are of small moment; so that God may have no other hand in them, than only to defend and preserve Men from the violence and fury of invisible Foes, and such external Accidents as might ruin and destroy them, and the Powers that He hath given them; for which yet continual Praise is due to him; yet in all things of greater Moment, or upon which any considerable Event is to depend; and in all Cases, wherein there is need of any more than common Wisdom, and Skill, and Power; and in all Moral Cases and Causes; and in all, in which the Happiness of Man is much concern'd, it is highly reasonable to suppose, that considering the weakness and folly of our Minds, and the strength of our Passions and Animal Affections, there is need of a continual interposition of Providence to guide and over-rule the Thoughts and Spirits of Men, for the bringing about of such Events as may be any way for our Comfort or Welfare. And we should humbly desire, that we may

be meerly left to the use of our own Natural Powers, or to our own Understandings; but should beg the secret influences of his Grace and Spirit to guide and assist us in all our Performances, that in all things we may act wisely and rightly to the honour of God, and our own Comfort, and the good of others. And these Influences we may be sure, He that made us, is able to impart unto our Minds, by clear and lively Representations of things to them, powerfully to incline them to such ways as may be best. And it is surely the greatest Happiness of Man in this Life, to be always under such Divine Conduct and Government, that he may be always led in those ways that are safe, and wise and good. So that a Man would even chuse to be nothing in himself, but would be glad to be at all times under the Direction and Government of God's good Spirit in all he doth, *Psal.* 5. 8. 43. 3. 139. 24. 119. 5. 31. 3. and 37. 23.

Q. Doth not God exercise a more especial Providence over his own Church and People?

A. Yes; For if God hath a Providence over all Creatures, and over all Men especially, then most especially over those Men, who have the nearest Relation to him, and are in Covenant with him, and his peculiar People, to preserve and govern them and all their Actions, to order all Occurrences and Events that befall them; and all the Motions of all the Creatures for their good, or for their Correction, if need be, and for his own Glory in them, 2 Chron. 1. 6. The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose Heart is perfect with him, Psal. 33. 18. The Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his Mercy, Psal. 34. 15. and 25. 9, 10. All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth unto such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies, Psal. 40.

5. *Job.* 36. 7, 8. *Isa.* 49. 16. *Rom.* 8. 28. This Care God takes of them, because of the singular Relation which He hath to them, *Isa.* 63. 8. *Hos.* 2. 18, 19, 20. *Isa.* 49. 15. *Matth.* 12. 49, 50. And from the singular Affection He bears to them, so that they are to him as the Apple of his Eye, *Zeph.* 3. 17. *Deut.* 32. 3. And because of his Interest in them; they being the Persons that serve him, whilst the rest of the World lieth in Wickedness, *Rev.* 14. 4, 5. And He is engag'd thereunto by his Peoples Prayers, more than by the rest of the World, *Cant.* 2. 14. *Isa.* 45. 11. And by our Saviour's Inrercession most of all, *Zech.* 1. 12. *Job.* 17. 15.

So that nothing comes to pass, tho' seemingly never so accidental, but what God hath the oversight of, and doth guide and govern some way or other by his Providence so, as may best answer the End thereof. And so the Scripture leads us to the Acknowledgment of God in all: As in the Story of *Abraham's* Servant, *Gen.* 24. 27. And many Things in *Joseph's* Life. *Moses* and *Aaron's* meeting one another. Many things in *David's* Life, which were the occasion of his Preferment. And so in *Job's* Afflictions. In the great Deliverance that came to the *Jews* in *Mordecai's* time. So in the Lot that is cast into the Bag. And many times we have had some extraordinary discoveries of God's Government, by the signal Deliverances He hath given, hearing of Prayers, and turning the Scene of Things upon a sudden; strange discoveries of hidden Crimes, and suitableness of Punishments, and exact fulfilling of Prophecies.

And yet after all, as for the mode or manner of the Divine Government, how He moves, how He acts, how He over-rules, how He determines, how He brings about Events; this is all for the greatest part a meer obscurity to us, so that 'tis but lit-

tle of his Ways that we are acquainted with. But this we may conclude, That He always acts agreeably to the Nature of Things, that the Liberty of free Agents is always preserv'd, that He is not in any respect the Author or Promoter of any Sin, which his Soul hates; but that all good is principally and originally from him, and to be ascribed to him.

Q. But is it not a great prejudice against this Doctrine of Providence, that evil Men do so often prosper in the World, and good Men meet with so much Trouble and Afflictions?

A. As for the Prosperity of evil Men, howsoever it may be misinterpreted by them, it is no way an Argument of God's overlooking their evil ways, or of his approbation of them; but the most that can be inferr'd from thence, is, That God is of a gracious and merciful Nature, long-suffering and patient; and that He is not willing to execute Punishmentss, till the mere necessity of Government doth call for it, *Lam. 3. 22. Psal. 86. 15. 103. 8. 78. 38. and 7. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9.* And therefore He giveth them time and space to repent, and return to him, and exhortates with them for it, *Psal. 81. 11, 13. Deut. 32. 9. Rom. 2. 4.* And sometimes it is for their pious Ancestors sake, or for the sake of other good Men, with whom they live, that God doth either delay or mitigate his Judgments, or bestoweth outward Blessings upon them, *1 Kin. 11. 9, &c. and 15. 3. 2 Kin. 22. 16--19. Gen. 18. 25. Jer. 5. 1. Ezek 22. 30* Sometimes it is for the reward of some good that they have done, which because they are not like to have hereafter, they shall have here, *2 Kin. 10. 30.* Sometimes it is, that they may be a Scourge to others, and there is some rough Work to do, that better Men are not fit for, *Isa. 10. 5. and 37. 26.* Sometimes He waits, till they

they are grown utterly incorrigible, for the greater vindication of his just Proceedings at last, *Gen.* 15. 16. *Rom.* 9. 17. And hereby God will give us a Lesson of Patience and Mercy toward those who have offended us, *Luke* 6. 30. *Eph* 4. 32. And the final extirpation of wicked Men, is reserv'd on purpose to the last, when God will separate between them and the Good, but in the mean time suffers them to grow up together, *Matth.* 13. 29-47.

But then on the other side, That good Men are oft afflicted, it is because they have some way need of it, *1 Pet.* 1. 6. It is to chasten them for their Sins, *Job* 36. 7, &c. And to take away their Sin, that they may be Partakers of his Holiness more, *Heb.* 12. 10. It is a necessary Cure for many Spiritual Distempers, to fetch down their Pride and Self-confidence that remains; to imbitter the Pleasures of this Life, which they are so much taken with, and to wean them from the World, *Psal.* 119. 67-71. It is to refine them, and make them better, to excite and brighten their Graces, and to put them upon the exercise thereof; to draw out their Prayers with more fervency, and to teach them Compassion towards others in their Distresses. *Is.* 48. 10. *Hos.* 5. 15. and 6. 1. *Rom.* 5. 2, 3. Sometimes it is to mellow their Spirits, and to prepare them for the greater Advancement afterward, *Job* 42. 10. *Is.* 54. 7, 8. Sometimes that they may be made Examples to others of Patience and Submission; as *Job* was, *Jam.* 5. 10, 11. *Phil.* 1. 13, 14. And a promiscuous Dispensation of Providence here, is a Lesson to us all of Reverence and Humility, and that neither the good Things, nor evil Things of this Life, are very considerable as to our chief Concerns, *Eccles.* 9. 1, 2. And it gives us a greater ground to expect a future Judgment, when all Things shall be

exactly adjusted and set right, *Eccles* 8. 10, 11. *Rom.* 2. 6. *Job* 33. 26.

Q. Doth not God also exercise a Government over Man, with respect to his Death, as well as with respect to his Life, and the various Events of it?

A. Yes: So as that Death shall seize upon no Man at any time, but by his providential Order or Permission: For we find that the Life of Man doth wholly depend upon the Divine Influence and Providence, and therefore shall be lengthen'd out so long, as it shall please God to continue the same, *Acts* 17. 25—28. *Psal.* 36. 6. And that nothing shall befall him, to put an end thereunto, but by his special direction or leave, *Matth.* 10. 30. *Psal.* 34. 20. *Job* 14. 5. *Psal.* 31. 15. And that when Death doth seize upon any Man in a way that seems purely accidental to us, yet even in that Case, it is referred to the Divine Providence and Disposing of the same; so that no fatal or mortal Accident doth befall any, but by the Divine Appointment, *Exod.* 21. 13. *Deut.* 19. 3, 4. *1 Kin.* 22. 34. And the Plagues, Sickneses, and Famine, and Sword, which are the usual Means of putting an end to Man's Life, are subject to the Divine Dispose, and that it is order'd by the same Providence, upon whom it is, that they shall fall, *Jer.* 15. 2. *Is.* 65. 12. *Psal.* 90. 6, 7, 8. And the Life and Death of other Things are govern'd by God, that are of much less consideration, than Man, *Psal.* 104. 27, 28, 29. *Mark* 10. 29. And the Devil and wicked Men, that are the most violent and outrageous to wreak their Malice upon others, and to do Mischief to them, can have no Power over any living, but by the Divine Government, and according to the Limits set to them by God, *Job.* 1. *Matth.* 8. 31, &c.

Q. What is the Use we should make of this?

A. It

A. It is much for the Comfort of all good Men, that they are thus under the particular Care, and watchful Providence of God ; so that no dangerous or mortal Events can befall them, but by the Order of Him that loveth them ; which should therefore teach and encourage them to be bold and fearless in the discharge of all their Duty, or when they are engag'd in any good Enterprize for God's Honour, or according to his Will ; and should have a firm trust and confidence in God's Care and Government, who will be sure to defend and protect them, as far as He seeth fit, and will suffer nothing to befall them without his Order, *Matth. 10. 28. Psal. 56. 3.* And if He gives them up to Death in the doing of Good, they may be sure it is, because God will glorify Himself and them the more thereby. So that they shall not be any losers by it ; which should satisfy them, *Prov. 14. 32. Psal. 116. 15. 1 Cor. 3. 22. Rom. 8. 38. 1 Cor. 15. 55. Phil. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 11, 12.* And this should teach us to submit to Death at all times with Patience, when it comes, because it is God's doing, and cometh to pass by his wise Appointment, or Direction, who has a Power to dispose of us ; and as He sent us into the World, so He hath a Right to call us out of it when He pleaseth ; forasmuch as He oweth us nothing, nor can do us any wrong, nor ever doth any thing but with great Wisdom and Counsel, *Psal. 39. 9* And the like patient Submission there should be at the Death of Friends, or others, by whatsoever Means or Accidents, or mistake of Means or want of Means, it comes to pass ; because it is the All-wise, and Holy, and Just God, that over-rules the whole, *Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. 1 Sam. 3. 18.* And this should teach us moreover to seek and depend upon God for his Protection and Blessing at all times, from whom alone it can come to us ; so that

if He will be with us, nothing can hurt us; but must never be confident in ourselves, *Deut.* 30. 20. *Psal.* 62. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8. This should teach us to have Recourse to Him in Sickneses and Dangers, who only can deliver and save us, *Psal.* 68. 20. 2 *Chr.* 16. 12. 2 *Kin.* 1. 3. *Matth.* 9. 20.

But yet we must likewise use lawful and probable Means, tho' we must not depend upon them alone, *Isa.* 38. 21. And we must always take heed, that we do not provoke God to leave us, or to give us up to Death, as He may justly do, if we live sauntering, useles and unprofitable Lives in the World, and don't answer the End of our being in it, for the Service of God and our Generations; for why should God take any farther Care of us, when it appears, that we spend our Life and Time to no good purpose? And we must take heed, that we be not found in an evil Way, or about any evil Enterprize, to provoke him to cut us off; and that we do not give way to Intemperance and Excess, or run ourselves upon any needles Dangers. For then we put ourselves out of God's Protection, and may be justly left to our own Folly, whereby we may be cut off before our time, *Prov.* 10. 27. *Psal.* 34. 12, 13, 14, 15. 1 *Kin.* 3. 14. *Psal.* 55. 23.

Q. What are the general Uses, that we should make of the Doctrine of Providence?

A. It should teach us to ascribe the Being, Continuance, Preservation and Supply of all things to God; and to give Him the Praise thereof, when we receive any Mercy or Blessing, whatsoever it be, or whatever be the Means thereof; and not to attribute it to our own Skill or Power, *Psal.* 103. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8. and 144. 1, 2, 9, 10. *Habak.* 1. 16. *Hos.* 2. 8. *Dan.* 5. 23. *Isa.* 10. 13, 14. *Ezek.* 28. 4, 5. To seek all Things from Him, and to have our continual Recourse to Him, for all the Good

that

that we stand in need of, or for the averting of any Evil which we either feel or fear, *Psal.* 37. 5. *Prov.* 16. 3. *Phil.* 4. 6. *Neb.* 1. 11. *Gen.* 24. 12. *1 Sam.* 23. 9, 10. *2 Sam.* 2. 1. *Job* 22. 27. *2 Kings* 19. 15. *Gen.* 32. 11. *Rom.* 1. 10. And not to trust in, or be any ways confident in ourselves or others, nor to rely upon Means of themselves for any Good, *Prov.* 28. 36. and 27. 1. *Psal.* 118. 8. and 146. 3. *Isa.* 31. 1, 2. *Prov.* 21. 31. *Psal.* 33. 16, 17. *Job* 35. 9, 10. and 9. 12, 13. *2 Chron.* 16. 7, 12. and to be contented with the divine Allotments, and to bear Afflictions with Patience and Humbleness of Mind, whoever may be the Instruments thereof, *Job* 1. 21. and 2. 10. *Jer.* 18. 6. and 33. 12. *Job* 34. 31. *1 Sam.* 3. 8. *2 Sam.* 15. 26. and 16. 10, 11. *Psal.* 39. 9. *Prov.* 19. 3. *Psal.* 119. 75.

And we should always rejoice in the divine Providence and Government of the World, though there may be some Pieces thereof that we cannot fathom into the Depth of, *Psal.* 97. 1. and 95. 1, 2, 3. and 48. 11. 12. and 58. 11. And should not be afraid of wicked Mens Threats or Enterprizes, as if they could hurt us of themselves, but should commit our Cause to God, and rest in his Dispose, being assured that nothing can befall us but by Him, *Isa.* 8. 12, 13. and 51. 7, 12. *Psal.* 56. 2, 3. *1 Kings* 20. 11. *Exod.* 15. 9. *Amos* 5. 9. *Jer.* 37. 10. But yet we must not presume upon Providence without the Use of Means; nor yet use any indirect Means to compass any End; which is as much as to say, we will, whether God will or no. But we must use lawful Means, and leave the rest to God, *Mat.* 4. 4. Nor must we find fault with Providence for that which is the Fruit of Mens own Folly; as when a Man drinks himself sick or poor, &c. And seeing Providence governs all, we must not envy or grudge at the Welfare of others

thers whom God is pleased to bestow Good upon, *Psal.* 37. 1. *Mat.* 20. 13, 14. *Prov.* 23. 17. and 24. 1. yet must no Man use what he hath. as he list, but to God's Glory and the Good of Men, not to injure or oppress his Neighbour. Nor are we bound to suffer Mens Abuse of their Goods or Power, to the Injury or Wrong of ourselves or others, but may seek the Redress of Grievances in just and lawful Ways, and may endeavour to cut off or remove the Occasions thereof: For however God doth bless Men with many good Things, He doth not allow them to wrong others therewith; but gives us leave to vindicate our just Rights, and to rescue ourselves out of the Hands of violent Men, by such means as are allowed to us, *Mich.* 3. 1, 2, 3. *Job* 29. 17. *Psal.* 10. 17, 18. *Ezek.* 45. 8. *Isa.* 14. 2.

Q. Is not God most Holy in his Government?

A. Yes: He never willeth, or decreeth, or commands, or doth any Thing in his Government but that which is Good and Right, and what is agreeable to the Dictates of the purest Wisdom, to the Nature of Things, and the Relations He hath settled them in, of one to another; and He loveth and approves of nothing else, *Fer.* 9. 24. *Psal.* 19. 7, 8. *Mich.* 6. 8. *Deut.* 32. 4. This is his Holiness, which is an Attribute also that is often ascribed to God, *Psal.* 111. 9. *Luke* 1. 49. *Isa.* 6. 1, 2, 3. *Rev.* 4. 8. and 15. 4. 1 *Sam.* 2. 2. *Lev.* 19. 2. *Psal.* 145. 17. and 99. 5.

For such is the Perfection of the divine Knowledge and Wisdom, that He cannot be liable to any Error or Mistake in His judging of Things; He can understand nothing to be right, but what is right, and to be good, but what is good; because He made all Things, and fitted their Beings and all their Parts, and settled the Relations between them,

them, and perfectly knoweth all the Accommodations of Things one to another, and what the Resultances are that naturally flow from them, and all their Congruities and Conveniences. And such is the Rectitude of his own most perfect Nature and Will, as always to follow the Dictate of his infinite and unerring Wisdom, and to act by it. Such Goodness and Perfection being essential to Him, there is this immutable and invariable Inclination in Him, thus to will and to do ; so that there is no Uncleaness or Impurity, or Obliquity in Him, no moral Evil or Defect, nor can be ; none in himself, and none that He commands, countenances, determineth or effects, but is what He hates and bears an Indignation against, and what is an utter Abomination to his most perfect Nature, his unerring Wisdom, Will and Goodness, *Psal. 5. 4. Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in Wickedness, neither can any Evil dwell with Thee, Habak. 1. 13. Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil ; Thou canst not look on Iniquity, Psal. 45. 7. Thou lovest Righteousness and hatest Wickedness, Zech. 8. 17. Prov. 6. 16, 17.*

Q. What may we learn from hence ?

A. That God cannot be the Author, or so much as a Favourer of Sin in Men ; nor can He any ways decree it, determine, intice, or lead to it ; But Sin is all from ourselves, and from our own corrupt Lusts and inordinate Affections, assisted and set forward by the Devil's Temptations, *Jam. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16.* But when Men have hardened their Hearts from his Fear, and are become incorrigible by all proper Methods that are fit to be used to them for their Amendment ; or are become bold and presumptuous in themselves, and live as if they were in a State of Independency upon Him, or chuse rather to be Instruments and Agents in the Devil's Kingdom and to do his Work, and become

become his willing Slaves; it is then just with God, and He is provok'd thereby to leave them to their own Hearts Lusts and Passions, and to the Devil's Wiles and Temptations, whose Service they chuse to be engaged in rather than in God's, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *Rev.* 22. 11. *Rom.* 1. 21, 24, 26. 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. *Exod.* 10. 1. compared with 8. 15, 32. 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. with 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Mat.* 13. 13, 14, 15. 1 *Kings* 22. 19, 20, 21, 22. *Eph.* 2. 1, 2. *Rev.* 20, 2, 3, 8. *Luke* 22. 3, 4, 5. *Rom.* 11. 8, 10. *Deut.* 28. 28.

For God is no way obliged by an Act of Omnipotency to hinder the Sins of Men, whom he hath made free and rational Agents, when He hath done all that could be expected of a wise and righteous Governour to prevent it; by the Exhibition and Promulgation of righteous Laws, and adding proper Sanctions thereunto, and giving all convenient Assistance and Encouragement to the Observation thereof, when He knoweth by his infinite Wisdom how to bring Good out of that Evil which is done by Men. But it would be rather incongruous ordinarily so to do, in this State of Probation; because that would be to break in upon the Nature of Things, and upon the Order of that Government which He had settled and capacitated Mankind for. The Holiness of God appears by his Laws, and by his Rewards and Punishments annex'd thereunto; by which He hath abundantly manifested the same, and much more yet by sending his Son and Spirit to redeem and save Men from Sin: And yet He sheweth his Wisdom and Power moreover, by restraining, limiting, and governing the Sins of Men, that however outrageous Mens Lusts are, yet only those Events shall be brought to pass thereby that shall either serve as Punishments to themselves or others, or else as an Occasion for the promoting or obtaining some other Good which they

they little intended, *Gen.* 50. 20. *Isa.* 10. 6, 7. *Acts* 2. 23. and 4. 27, 28. And hence therefore we must learn to acquit God from all Imputation of any Evil to him.

But we must not only acquit God from being the Author or Promoter, but also from being so much as a Favourer of any Sin, or of Sinners as such; which is the Case of those that presume upon his Mercy and Grace, whilst they continue in a Course or Habit of Sin; which is to imagine, as if God had no great Aversion from it, contrary to his expresse Declarations of himself, *Psal.* 50. 18, 19, 20. *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. So it is when Men put up Petitions to Him, or depend upon Him, to favour them in their Lusts, or in their covetous, oppressive, or ambitious Practices, *Jam.* 4. 3. *Isa.* 58. 4. *Prov.* 21. 27. or when they are careless and negligent in their Addresses to Him, without the Exercise of the humble Devotion of their Hearts, *Lev.* 10. 3. *Mat.* 15. 8. or when they encourage themselves in Sin by the Grace of the Gospel, when yet the ultimate End of all was to shew forth the Mercy and Holiness of God together, and not to exalt the former with Derogation from the latter, *Rom.* 6. 1, 2, &c. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. or when Men content themselves with a meer Faith, without Holiness or good Works following; when true Faith, as it is a Dedication of ourselves to Christ and his most holy Service, must have all Vertue in the Bowels of it, and will be productive of an hearty and universal Obedience to all the Commands of God, *Tit.* 3. 8. *Jam.* 2. 14. And so when Men have no respect to Christ as the Mediator to bring us to God, or to his Merit to atone for us, 1 *Job.* 1. 9. and 2. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *Psal.* 143. 2. *Job* 9. 20.

But we must also take heed that we do not slight Holiness, which is the Image of God, which would
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be a Reflection upon, and an Affront to the Holiness of God; which yet is plain Men are guilty of, when they do not labour to transcribe in themselves this most glorious and imitable Perfection of the Divine Nature, *Prov.* 21. 14. or when they labour to do it but in part, *Eph.* 4. 22, 23, 24. *1 Thes.* 5. 23. and 3. 12, 13. *Heb.* 13. 21. or do not pursue it steadily, but at some certain Times, or in some certain Places only, as if it were to change with the Humours or Passions, or carnal Interests of Men, *Psal.* 119. 112. *Phil.* 2. 12. or when they prefer any thing else before it, as Beauty, Riches, or any other Accomplishments; whereas this is really the highest Perfection of Men, and fits them for the greatest Enjoyments, and all the Learning and Knowledge in the World is nothing in comparison of it, *Prov.* 4. 7. and 9. 10 and 10. 2. But much more is it a Contempt of Holiness when Men do neither pursue it themselves, nor by their good Will suffer others to do it, but discourage or persecute it as much as they can, and bring all the Disgrace they can upon Strictness in Religion, and delight only in leading such a Life as is earthly, sensual, devilish, *2 Tim.* 3. 4, 5. *2 Pet.* 2. 12. *Mat.* 23. 13. *Prov.* 14. 9. and 10. 23. *Phil.* 3. 18. *Jude* 12

But such being the Holiness of God, we are especially to adore, and praise, and extol him for it; this being that which renders all his other Perfections most glorious; because by this we are assur'd that all his Power and Greatness will be used well, *Psal.* 22. 3. and 99. 5. *Rev.* 15. 4. And it should make us humble ourselves and blush before Him, when we consider our own Vileness and Wretchedness, and how unlike we are to Him. *Job* 42. 5. *Isa.* 6. 2, 3, 5. and 64. 5, 6. *Ezek.* 36. 31. And therefore should carefully watch against all Sin, and zealously

zealously oppose it in the World, as being a direct Contradiction to God's Holiness, and being nothing else but Crookedness and Iniquity; as Holiness is nothing else but Rectitude and Straitness, being a willing and doing always that which is right.

And that we may do Honour to God's Holiness, we must labour with all our Might to imitate Him therein, and to be conform'd to Him, by walking in all Things, according to that Rule of Right which He hath given us in his Commands, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. The Holiness of God being an Argument to us both of the Excellency of Holiness and also of the Necessity of it, to our pleasing of God and enjoying his Favour, and of all Good from him, *Heb.* 12. 14. 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Matth.* 5. 8. But our Holiness as a Conformity to, or an Imitation of God, is rather to be defin'd by a Conformity to God's Will, Nature, and Law; than always by a Conformity to God in his Acts or Works, some of which are proper to God only, as others are proper to Man, according to the Will of God, and the just Reason of Things. So that as Holiness in God, is nothing else but that Infinite and most perfect Rectitude and Straitness of the Divine Nature, whereby He is perfectly and invariably inclin'd, both to will and to do that, and only that, which is Just, and Right, and Good, according to the Rule and Dictate of his own unerring and infinite Understanding and Wisdom: So Holiness in us, is that Disposition whereby we are inclin'd to will and to act also that, which is right and good, according to the Will of God, and according to that Rule which He hath given us, as the Expression and Sign of his Will; whereby we imitate and transcribe the Nature and Will of God in our Wills and Affections,

Affections, and act accordingly in our several Capacities and Stations.

Q. And is not God most Just and Righteous in his Government?

A. Yes; He is Just and Righteous in every thing He doth; in his Commands, in his Threatnings, and in his Executions thereof, Psal. 145. 17. He is Righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works, Psal. 111. 7. The Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, Jer. 9. 24. And exerciseth Loving-kindness, Judgment and Righteousness in the Earth; for in these Things do I delight, saith the Lord, Deut. 32. 4. Just and Righteous is He, Thus He is in all his Commands, Psal. 119. 8. The Statutes of the Lord are right. Psal. 119. 128. All his Precepts are right. God requireth nothing of us, but what is reasonable and good, and what is profitable and useful to us, that are the Subjects of his Kingdom; and in the observance of which we should promote our own Happiness and Welfare here, all things consider'd; and what is necessary to refine and fit us for a better State, so that in keeping the Commands of God, as we do that which is our Duty to him, so we promote our own Interest and Comfort. And if God should indulge us in the breach of any of his Laws, it would but be a prejudice to us, and we should be the worse for it, Mic. 6. 8. Rom. 12. 1. Mic. 2. 7. The Laws of God are every way agreeable to Reason, and to the Reason and Nature of Things, and cannot be altered or abated without a contradiction thereunto. As for that hardness, and difficulty that we find in the observance of them, that is not to be imputed to God; but it ariseth from that blindness of Mind, and from that exorbitancy of Lust and Passion, which came upon us by the Fall, and from those corrupt Habits and Inclinations to Evil, which we have since contracted and increas'd. And there is

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no reason that God should vary from, or abate, or act contrary to the Reason of Things, because our Nature is grown weak and impotent. And yet for a Remedy hereof, because of the blindness of our Minds to discern good and evil, He hath sent his Prophets, and his own Son and his Apostles to acquaint us with his Will; and hath given us many great and precious Promises to encourage and engage us to the doing thereof; which if we did receive with a firm and lively Faith, it would be a strong Principle in us to bear down all contrary Passions; and He hath made us the offer of his Grace and Spirit to enable us to do his Will in such Measures, as He will accept at our hands. So that He hath done for us every way in this Case, what a Just and Good Governor can be expected to do, *Heb. 1. 1. and 2. 3. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Luke 11. 13.*

And as for his Threatnings to the Disobedient, even that of Eternal Death, which is so much complain'd of by many, we see it is no more than is needful, to work upon Mens Fears, to move them that way to forsake their Sins, and to follow that which is right for their own good; so that this very Threatning is intended for their good, and to prevent their Ruin, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* And yet we see, that this, as hard as it seems to be, will hardly prevail with Men to leave their Follies and Iniquities, and return to a right Mind; and what would less do then? And now they have warning of it, and Means given them to avoid it, and all this is done for that very End, that they may avoid it; if they perish and bring this Wrath upon themselves, they must blame themselves for their own foolish choice. For what God hath threatned, there is no reason but that they should expect that He should execute, tho' through their own Folly or hardness of Heart they would not believe or fear it. God doth not

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desire to execute it; but if they will not be reclaim'd by the warning of it, they must take it as it falls, *Ezek. 33. 11.* And that which vindicates the Justice and Goodness of God in this matter more, is this, That God doth not threaten eternal Punishments to all Sin now under the Gospel Administration, but only to wilful Impenitency, or continuance in Sin and an irreclaim'd State, in the neglect or contempt of those Means which He hath afforded in order to reduce them. For if they repent and turn from their evil Ways, and do sincerely endeavour to keep his Commandments, and are willing to accept of Pardon upon the gracious Terms of the Gospel, He will forgive all their Sins, and is willing to receive them, and accept of their Obedience, tho' mix'd with many Imperfections. And if they will not do this, what have they cause to complain of? *1 Job. 1. 9.* and *2. 1.* And this Threatning against wilful Impenitency and Sin, is justly given out by God; because if Men continue irreclaimable in a State and Habit of Sin, defeating all the Means that can be used to amend them, they are not fit for any better State in the very Nature of the thing; nor is there any reason that God should any longer have regard to them, or bestow upon them any good, but leave them to the Devil, whom they chuse to serve, to have dominion over them for ever, in that Immortal Nature which in the original Creation was intended to them, *Heb. 6. 7, 8. 10. 27. 1 Job. 3. 3.*

And thus God is righteous in all his Executions here, *Job 34. 10, 11.* and *37. 23. Gen. 18. 25. Psal. 119. 137. Zeph. 3. 5. Dan. 7. 9.* He punisheth none but for Sin; nor above their deserts, *Ezra. 9. 13. Job 11. 6.* He hath always respect to Men according to the good or evil that is in them; and doth neither favour nor disfavour them upon any other account,

account, but according to their Works, *Acts* 10. 34, 35. *Psal.* 7. 11, 12. 11. 5. and 73. 1. *Mal.* 3. 8, 9. yet He is Long-suffering many times toward wicked Men, tho' they make a bad use of it. And it is not necessary, that the Justice of God, as Governor of the World, should punish Sin presently, but the Time and Manner must be determin'd by his Wisdom. And we have seen before, that there may be many wise Reasons for the deferring of Punishment here. But He always favours the righteous Cause of righteous Persons, *Psal.* 11. 7. 1. 6. 58. 11. 75. 10. 37. 17. and 55. 22. *Eccl.* 8. 12, 13. *Job* 37. 7. 2 *Chr.* 19. 7. And yet if He punisheth or corrects, or afflicts, it is all for wise and good Ends, in proper measure and proportion, according to the Rules of Wisdom and Government, *Heb.* 12. 10. And if in publick Calamities, the Innocent fall with the Guilty, He doth but take away what He hath given, and what He hath a Sovereign Right to do; so that He doth no Man wrong therein; and He will make it up to good Men hereafter, and then will more thoroughly execute Punishment upon the wicked, and set all seeming Inequalities right.

Q. What should we learn from hence?

A. We must take heed, that we do not censure God in any thing that He doth, or in any of his Providences and Dispensations towards us or others; we must never accuse him for, or so much as suspect him of any hard or unrighteous Dealing; but we must ever justify him, and think honourably of him, and of all his Words and Ways, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Ezek.* 18. 25. and 33. 20. Whatsoever Affliction or seeming Hardship befalls us, or whatsoever Adversity we lie under, we ought to bear it with Patience, without any murmuring; being assur'd of this, That whatever God doth, is most right and good.

For tho' as an Omnipotent Being, He is able to do any thing to us, yet his Power being always exerted in Justice, we need never fear that He will put it forth in any unrighteous Acts; and we ought sure to bear our Deserts patiently, *Neb. 9. 33. 1 Sam. 3. 18. Mic. 7. 9. Job 34. 12. 2 Sam. 15. 25. Lam. 3. 39. Psal. 97. 2.* We ought to conceive honourably of God in all his Judgments, *Rev. 15. 3. and 19. 3. Dan. 4. 37. Exod. 2. 27.* And it is a powerful Argument to us to depart from Iniquity; for all must surely expect, that as they are, so God will deal with them in time, first or last; tho' he seems to delay. For Patience and Forbearance are no remission; nor will he spare his own People, if they offend him, *Psal. 50. 21, 22. Rom. 9. 22. Acts 17. 31. Rom. 2. 5. Psal. 89. 30, 31. Jer. 21. 14. Job 31. 3. Amos 3. 2* And this should teach us to be just and righteous in all our Dealings with God and Man. Give God his due of Honour, and Worship, and Love, and Faith, and Fear, and of an whole and entire Obedience: And give every Man his due also, *Rom. 13. 7. Phil. 4. 8.*

Q. And is not God most True and Faithful?

A. Yes: For God always speaks as He thinks, means and intends in every thing. This comes to pass from the Holiness and Rectitude of his Will, by which He is dispos'd to do always that which is Right: So that God hath no intent to deceive or circumvent us with false Promises, that He never intends to make good; or to possess us with vain Hopes of Things that are never likely to come to pass. He cannot be guilty of any insincere or Double-dealing in any thing whatsoever, *Psal. 19. 7. Job. 17. 17. Psal. 25. 10. Rev. 3. 7. 6. 10. and 15. 3. Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Rom. 3. 4. Psal. 117. 2. and 100. 5. Exod. 34. 6.* Therefore we ought assuredly to hope and trust in him for the fulfilling
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of all his Promises; for He never forgets in the proper Time and Season, howsoever He may seem to us to delay, *Deut.* 7. 9. *Isa.* 25. 1. *Rev.* 21. 5. *1 King.* 8. 23---56. *Josh.* 21. 44. *Exod.* 12. 41. *Psal.* 111. 3--5--7. 8. *Rom.* 3. 3. *Jam.* 1. 17. *Heb.* 10. 23. Only we must see, that we don't mistake the Nature of the Promises, and expect more than they contain; as in temporal Cases we are apt to do, concerning which we have only general Promises, and must leave particular Determinations to God's own Judgment and Counsel, and then we must also see, that we perform the Conditions, or else we don't hope regularly, but meerly presume, *Deut.* 7. 9. 10. And wicked Men, without Repentance, may dreadfully expect the fulfilling of the Threatnings, *Deut.* 29. 19. *Isa.* 57. 21. and 3. 11. *Lev.* 26. 24. *Psal.* 18. 25. *Lam.* 2. 17. *Matth.* 24. 35. And thus God being most True in himself, we may be sure, He takes delight in Truth in us; and therefore we should be true and faithful to fulfil our Vows and Promises to God, *Deut.* 23. 21. *Eccles.* 5. 4. *2 Chron.* 15. 15. *Neb.* 9. 34. *Psal.* 44. 17. and 78. 35. And so for all our Covenants and Dealings with Man, *Eph.* 4. 24. 25. *Isa.* 59. 13, 14, 15. *Hos.* 4. 1. 2.

As for what is said, *Jer.* 4. 10. *1 Kin.* 22. 22. *Ezek.* 14. 9. it is to be all understood of permitting an evil Spirit, and false Prophets to deceive them, when Men chuse rather to be led by the Devil's Deceptions, or to follow the Counsels of their own Hearts, rather than the light of God's Word, because their Deeds are evil; to which therefore in such Cases they are justly left of God.

Q. What will follow from all this Doctrine concerning God?

A. That he is a Peerless and Super-eminent Majesty, infinitely exalted above all Blessings and

Praise; a boundless Ocean of all Good, having all Sufficiency and all Fulness of Being, Excellency and Perfection in and of himself, originally and independently, so that there can never be any diminution thereof, nor can any ravish it from him, and therefore is unchangeable in all. So that there is nothing like unto him, or that can be compar'd with him; but all Creatures are as nothing in comparison of him, or at best are but poor little Beings, mean things in the very best and top of all their Pomp and Glory; and that do not deserve so much as to be mention'd with him; whereas God is above all other the most High, most Amiable, most Adorable Being, and only One. So that we ought to be quite swallow'd up in the Admiration of him, and should pant and breath after him, and after more of the Knowledge of him, and more Acquaintance with him, and Conformity to him; we should live wholly upon God, and to God, as All in All; and let Faith, Hope and Love be daily feeding on him; we should value nothing worthy of our pursuit in comparison of his Love, and being brought near to him; we should reverence him highly in Thought, Word and Deed; prefer him, adore him, fear his Name, and set forth his Praise, trust in him, resign ourselves to him and to his holy Government intirely, submit ourselves absolutely to his dispose, seek Happiness from him, and act for him, and for the promoting of his Glory with all our might; and look upon it an exceeding high Honour conferred upon us, that we may be at all imploy'd in serving him. In all our Distresses, Pains, Wants and Troubles, we should make him our Refuge, and fetch our Comfort from him.

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And when God is so exceeding High, and Great, and Good, we may conclude, the Thoughts of God can be troublesome to none, but those that are resolved to be wicked, and to make themselves Brutes or Devils in opposition to him, and to live in defiance against him. For all his most Glorious Excellencies consider'd together, no wise Man would wish, that God either could, or should be one jot otherwise than He is; being Reason, Wisdom, Goodness, Light, Life, Power, Holiness, Love and Justice itself. All Glory therefore be to the Most High and Mighty God, all Praise, Love, Honour and Obedience, now and for evermore. *Amen, and Amen.*

S E C T. IV.

Of God the Son; his Names, Offices and Relations.

Q. **W**HAT doth the second Branch of the Creed treat of?

A. Of God the Son, and the Work of Redemption.

Q. What was the occasion of the Work of Redemption wrought by God the Son?

A. The occasion of it was, that sinful and wretched Estate that all Mankind was fallen into by the Transgression of our first Parents, in eating the forbidden Fruit. For by that one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death pass'd upon all Men thro' him, in whom all have sinned. For by the disobedience of that one Man many were made Sinners; and so by the Offence of that one Man Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, Rom. 5. 12-18, 19. &c. So that both Jew and Gentile were all under Sin, Rom. 3. 9. And they were all gone out of the way; and there was none righteous; no not one; but all the World was become guilty before God, ver. 10-12-15. The whole World lay in Wickedness, 1 Joh. 5. 19. And all were concluded under Sin, Gal. 3. 22, the best were conceived in Sin, and shapen in Iniquity, Psal. 51. 5, they were all a Seed of Evil-doers, Isa. 1. 4. Transgressors from the Womb, Isa. 48. 8. For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Job 14. 4. He that is born of a Woman, how should he be Righteous? Job 15. 14.

So that all their Parts and Faculties were corrupted: *The Understanding darkened and alienated from the Life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. *The Thoughts and Imaginations of Mens Hearts, evil from their Youth*, Gen. 8. 21. *The Mind and Conscience defiled*, Tit. 1. 15. *and in their Flesh dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. 7. 18. *But Sin dwelleth in them*, ver. 20. *and Evil is present with them*, ver. 21. *And there is a Law in their Members bringing into captivity to the Law of Sin*, ver. 23. *the carnal Mind being enmity against God, and not subject to the Law of God*, Rom. 8. 7. And a universal Impotency to Good therefore also came upon Man, together with a proneness to all Evil: For *that which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh*, Joh. 3. 6.

And all were likewise in a State of Slavery to the Devil, who is the Prince of the Power of the Air, *that works in the Children of Disobedience*, Eph. 2. 2. *The God of this World having blinded their Eyes*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. *and they are taken captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. From all which it came to pass, that Men generally were filled with all Unrighteousness, Wickedness Covetousness, and were become Haters of God. &c. Rom. 1. 29 and therefore the Misery of Man was great upon him.

For *because of these Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience*, Eph. 5. 6. *The Wrath of God being revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men*, Rom. 1. 18. For by reason of this great Corruption of our Natures, tho, we were still capable Subjects of the Divine Mercy, yet we were become wholly unfit for Communion with God. For *what Communion could God, who is perfect Light, have with meer Darkness?* 2 Cor. 6. 14. *The Iniquities of Men justly caused a separation between them and their God*, Isa. 59. 2. *so that his Soul loatheth them for it*, Zech. 11. 8. *and they are naked*
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and hide themselves from the Presence of the Lord, Gen. 3. 7, 8. Being full of Guilt, and therefore also of Fear, and all their Life-time subject to Bondage, Heb. 2. 15. For the Wages of Sin is Death, Rom. 6. ult. and there is a Wrath to come, Mat. 3. 7. Indignation, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul that doth evil, Rom. 2. 8, 9. An everlasting Punishment, Matth. 25. 46. The Damnation of Hell, Matth. 23. 33. A Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, where the Worm never dyeth, Mark 9. 44. For God is able to cast into Hell, Luke 12. 5. For who knoweth the Power of his Anger? Psal. 90. 11. So that it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God, Heb. 10. 31. This sad, sinful and wretched State that Mankind was fallen into, wherein all were under a Curse, was the occasion of this great Work of Redemption, and made it necessary, in order to Man's Recovery and Salvation, which God in his infinite Mercy design'd for him, Rom. 3. 23, 24.

Q. What was the Ground and Reason of this Work of Redemption?

A. It was God's own Free-Grace and meer Pity alone to his poor fallen Creature: It was from the Bowels of his meer Compassion towards him, that had been so miserably seduc'd by the Tempter from him. God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, Joh. 3. 16. It was not, that we loved God; but He loved us, and sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, 1 Joh. 4. 9, 10. Because He is rich in Mercy, for the great Love wherewith He loved us, Eph. 2. 4. and hath no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, Ezek. 33. 11. nor is willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Therefore the Kindness and Love of God towards Men appeared, when we were unworthy of any Help, Tit. 3. 4. For how can a Man be profitable unto God? Jer. 22. 2. And we were not able to help ourselves, being without Strength, Rom.

Rom. 5. 6. Therefore in his own Infinite Wisdom and Goodness He hath devis'd Ways, to bring us back to himself in a most wonderful manner, *to reconcile the World to himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. that we might be to the Glory of his Grace, according to his good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself, Eph. 1. 6-9. For by *Grace alone we are saved*, Eph. 2. 8. And it is through that Redeemer, *who came to seek and to save that which is lost*, Luke 19. 10.

Q. *What may all this teach us?*

A. This may well fetch down our high-looks, and proud stomachs; and may shew us, what little reason we have to be exalted in ourselves, when we have such degenerate and corrupt Natures, and are every way so polluted and defiled, and are liable to so many Evils and Miseries, and must have been lost and perish'd for ever, had not a Merciful Redeemer undertaken for us to rescue and save us, Tit. 3. 3. Ezek. 16. 3, 4, 5. Job 40. 4. and 42. 6. Luke 18. 13. And it teacheth us, how exceedingly we are obliged to Almighty God for this his wonderful and most inestimable Grace and Mercy in taking pity upon us in our lost and fallen Estate, when we were become Apostates from him, and when He had no need of us, nor can have any profit by our Recovery; that He hath provided and sent such a Redeemer to us, unworthy Creatures and miserable Sinners. Well may we therefore be oblig'd to admire and extol him, and the riches of his Goodness to us for ever. All Love, all Glory, all Praise be to him evermore. Amen. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16, 17. Rev. 5. 12, 13.

And we should learn hence in holy imitation of God, according to our little Capacities, to be loving and compassionate towards those that are in Distress, and to relieve and help them, as we are
able

able to do, and that tho' they have offended us who are but their Fellow-Creatures, and therefore in respect of our Natures upon the same level with them; when God who sheweth us Mercy, is infinitely above us all, *Luke 6. 35, 36. Eph. 5. 1, 2. Col. 3. 12, 13. 1 Job. 4. 7--11.*

Q. How is our Redeemer here described?

A. By his Name, Office, and Relation both to God, and us.

Q. What is that Name, by which He us'd to be call'd?

A. His Name is JESUS, which signifies a Saviour; which was appointed to be given him by the expresse Command of God, Luke 1. 31. Matth. 1. 21. because He was to be the Saviour of Mankind, to save his People from their Sins, and from Death and Wrath, the consequents of Sin, Acts 5. 31. 1 Tim. 1. 15. And He only was to be the Saviour, Acts 4. 12. Rom. 5. 15--17. Eph. 1. 7. Heb. 1. 3. all other Salvation and Redemption being but a Type of this great Salvation, wrought by our Saviour, in the discharge of those Offices that were committed to him.

Q. What doth this teach us?

A. This Name in the true Intent and Purport thereof, carrieth in it above all others the greatest Comfort and Encouragement to poor despairing Sinners, trembling for fear of the Judgment to come, 1 Tim. 1. 15. Luke 1. 46, 47--68, 69--71. And it layeth a Foundation for sure Trust in him, and for having recourse to him, and to him alone, for Salvation, it being his Office and Business to save all those, that come unto him; whom He will in no wise cast out, 1 Job. 4. 14. 3. 17. and 4. 42. Eph. 5. 23. Job. 6. 37. Matth. 11. 29. And if any therefore miscarry it must be long of themselves,

selves, and their Damnation will be just upon them; it being to be imputed only to their own Obstinacy and Wilfulness in not complying with the Gospel Terms, upon which Salvation is offered; and not to any want of Means or Provision on God's part, *Joh. 5. 40. Luke 14. 16. Matth. 23. 37. Acts 13. 23-38, 39-41. Joh. 10. 10.*

And it teacheth us to admire the exceeding Goodness and Amiability of the Divine Nature, and the Riches of God's Grace, in procuring such a Saviour, and such Salvation for us; and which therefore we should labour to be still growing up more to the knowledge of, that we may be ravish'd with this Love, *Eph. 3. 18, 19. 1 Joh. 4. 8. Psal. 34. 8.* And it layeth an Obligation upon us, of an absolute and intire Devotedness to him, and to his Service; and of universal Obedience to his holy Will and Commands, in holy Love and Gratitude to him, for the Salvation thus wrought and offer'd by him, *2 Cor. 5. 14. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9. Psal. 119. 68. Rom. 12. 1.*

Q. What are his Offices, in the performance of which He is become a Jesus, or Saviour to us?

A. They are all contain'd in the Word Christ, which is another Name also frequently given him; and signifieth the same, which *Messiah* doth in *Hebrew*, and is as much as to say, the *Anointed*; which was to signify, that He was to discharge the Three great Offices of *King, Priest, and Prophet*; to all which Mēn us'd to be consecrated by the Ceremony of Anointing with Oyl, *1 Kin. 19. 15, 16. Exod. 40. 13. 15. 1 Sam. 15. 1.* Not that our Saviour was consecrated or set a-part to these Offices by any material Oyl pour'd upon him; but by that, which was signify'd thereby, by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, and by the fulness of the Graces

Graces of the Holy Spirit, which He receiv'd above measure, to fit him for the full discharge thereof. And upon this Account He was call'd the *Messiah*, or the *Anointed*, *Job.* 1. 41. and 4. 25. *Acts* 10. 38. and 4. 27. *Heb.* 1. 9. *Job.* 3. 34. *Luke* 4. 18-21. The consideration of which, doth engage and encourage us still more to a firm Trust and Reliance upon him, and Hope in him, for the attainment of Salvation; because He is every way so well capacitated by these his Offices to bring it about for us; so that none need or ought to despair thereof, upon the performance of those Conditions upon which it is offer'd to us.

Q. Now let me have an account of these Offices more particularly, which our Lord Jesus performed to bring about the Salvation of Men: And first, of his Prophe-
rick Office. Did our Lord execute the Office of a Prophet?

A. Yes: The Light and Law of Nature, which was implanted in Men, being so impair'd by the Fall, that it did not sufficiently direct Men in the Service of God, nor shew them the Remedy for their Defects, or how God might be aton'd or reconcil'd to them. And the additional Revelations, which God was pleas'd to give, together with the Law of *Moses*, tho' they were thought by Almighty God sufficient for that time, during the World's Non-age, yet having still too much obscurity in them, being not intended by God for a full and perfect Institution, but to be a School-master to prepare the way, and to lead us to Christ, *Gal.* 3. 23. After a long discovery of the Inefficacy of all that had gone before; about Four thousand Years after the Creation, after there had pass'd about Two thousand Years between the Creation and the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and about Two thousand

land Years more after that, the World being grown up now to its ripe and mature Age, it was thought fit by the Wisdom of God, to give it the last Declaration of his Will, and to send his Son into the World on purpose upon that Errand, *Gal. 4. 1, 2, 3, 4. Eph. 1. 9. 10.* according to the many Prophecies that went of him, That God would raise up a Prophet like unto Moses, *Deut. 18. 18. Acts 3. 22.* That He would give him for a Witness to the People, a Leader and Commander to the People, *Isa. 55. 4.* That the Messenger of the Covenant should come to them, *Mal. 3. 1.* That then the Eyes of the Blind should be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf should be unstopped, *Isa. 35. 5.* To this Office therefore He was Anointed by the Father, *Isa. 61. 1.* and did accordingly fulfil the same, *Luke 4. 18.* So that God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath now in these last Days, to give the last and full and perfect Revelation of himself, spoken unto us by his Son, *Heb. 1. 1, 2.* who was a Teacher come from God, *Joh. 3. 2.* who spake all as the Father gave him Commandment, *Joh. 12. 49.* And was sent a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the Glory of his People Israel, *Luke 2. 32.*

And accordingly He executed all the Parts of the Prophetick Office. Some Things were cancell'd and abolish'd, being in themselves found unprofitable, and being fulfilled in him, *Gal. 4. 1, &c.* and 5. 1. The Law that was before obscur'd by the darkning Glosses of the Pharisees, and in many things mutilated and maim'd, was vindicated and cleared up by him, *Matth. 5. 17, &c.* He being in the Bosom of the Father, hath now fully declared him to us, as far as is needful for us, *Joh. 1. 18.* and 14. 9. The Grace of God is now made manifest by his appearing, who hath brought Life and Immortality to a
more

more perfect and clearer *Light by the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Col. 1. 25, 26, 27. And being at last to leave the World in respect of his bodily Presence, and no more to teach in Person upon Earth, He appointed Officers and Substitutes in his room, to be his Vicegerents here, whom He Commission'd to go and publish the same Doctrine of Salvation to all Mankind, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. who were his *Ambassadors to Men, in Christ's stead*, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. *Christ's Missioners sent into the World*, Joh. 17. 17. called the *Foundations of the Churches*, *Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone*, Eph. 2. 20.

And that there might be a continual supply of Teachers in the Churches to the World's End, He hath also provided for that, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. and hath also left his Word with us to abide for ever, to be an Instruction to us in all that we are to believe and do, or hope; so that no new Point of Faith or Doctrine is ever more to be expected, there having been long ago a sealing up of Vision and Prophecy to any such End, *Dan.* 9. 24, 25. 1 Pet. 1. 25. 2 Tim. 3. 16 *Acts* 20. 32. And to make all more effectual, He was pleas'd to give the Promise of the Spirit, and to make his Gospel the Ministration of the Spirit to Men, that if they do not refuse the same, they may be enabled to live up to a suitable Conformity thereunto, *Joh.* 14. 16. *Luke* 11. 13. *Rom.* 8. 3. 4. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8. *Gal.* 3. 14.

Q. But how doth it appear, That this Jesus, whom we speak of, was indeed the true Messiah, or that great Prophet, that should come into the World, that was so spoken of and foretold by Moses and the Prophets?

A. That the Messiah is already come, is evident from the Time appointed and Fore-prophecy'd of,
for

for his coming, which was past long ago; the time of whose appearance was certainly to be about that time, when our Lord Jesus Christ was in the World. For it was to be before the utter destruction of the Jewish Polity or Government, which about that time came to an end, *Gen. 49. 10.* before the seventy Weeks were determined, that are mentioned by *Daniel*, chap. 9. 24. while the Second Temple stood, *Hag. 2. 9.* And then was the time when the *Jews* expected his coming, *Matth. 3. 1. John 4. 25.* And there was no other at that time or ever since that could lay a just claim to this high Title, but what were plainly discovered to be Impostors and Deceivers, and so were found to be by those, who for a time were their deluded Followers.

And all the Marks and Notes of the Messiah did meet in him, which were foretold by the Prophets. He was conceived of a Virgin, as the Messiah was to be, *Isa. 7. 14. Mat. 1. 25.* He descended of the Tribe which the Messiah was to proceed from, *Gen. 49. 9, 10. Isa. 11. 1, 10, Matthew 1. Luke 1.* He was born at *Bethlehem*, where the Messiah was to be born, *Mic. 5. 2. Matth. 2. 1.* And had all other circumstances concurring concerning his Life, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension that were foretold by the Prophets.

Besides which He had such Testimonies given unto him, as do abundantly confirm this Doctrine concerning him. He had the Testimony of Angels speaking to the Shepherds, *Luke 2. 11.* He had the Testimony of the Eastern *Magi*, that were directed by an extraordinary Star to the place of his Birth, *Matth. 2. 1.* He had the Testimony of those Persons at the time when he was born, that were Persons famous for Holiness among the *Jews*, and

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endued with a Spirit of Prophecy, *Elizabeth, Zaccharias, Simeon and Anna*, who all spake and Prophesied concerning him, *Luke 1. and 2.* He had the Testimony of *John the Baptist*, whom the *Jews* themselves had in great esteem, who was sent to prepare the way before him, *Isa. 40.*

3. *Mal. 4. 5. Luke 1. 17. Matth. 3. 3. John 1. 29.*

He had the Testimony of *God the Father* himself speaking from Heaven, *Matth. 3. 17. and 17. 5.*

He had the Testimony of the *Spirit of God*, speaking and working in him and with him.

He had the *Spirit of Power* resting upon him, enabling him to work many and incontestible Miracles, which the *Jews* themselves could not deny, but in a most unaccountable manner ascribed to the Devil, when his great Design and continual Work was to beat down the Devil's Kingdom; to which Miracles therefore he doth frequently appeal, and we find those that were unprejudiced Persons were accordingly convinc'd by them, *Matth. 12. 24, 25. John 5. 36. and 3. 2. and 6. 14. and 10. 37, 38.* He had the *Spirit of Wisdom*, by which he taught and discours'd so, as never Man did; so that his Adversaries themselves were confounded, tho' He was never brought up or educated in Human methods of Learning, *Matth. 7. 29 Luke 4. 22. and 24. 19. John 7. 46. Matth. 22. 33, 46.* He had the *Spirit of Holiness*, in the highest and most eminent manner. He lived a self-denying Life in the World; He only sought his Father's Glory, and not the Glory of this World; He was a compleat Example of the most elevated Virtue, a perfect Pattern of Good-works, continually going about doing good, and acting therein with the fervent and most burning Zeal, being grieved for the hardness of Mens Hearts

in refusing their own Peace, *John* 8. 49, 50. *Mark* 3. 20, 21. *John* 2. 17. He had the Spirit of Prophecy likewise, exactly foretelling the Ruin and Destruction of the Jewish Nation for their Infidelity, the Miracles that his Disciples and Followers should work in his Name; the great Persecutions which they should undergo; the Preaching of the Gospel thro' all Nations, the propagating and increase of the Christian Church and its continuance, notwithstanding all the Persecutions it should suffer; the manner and kind of his own Death, His Resurrection on the third Day, and the mission of the Spirit in a more eminent manner, every one of which things came to pass, as he had foretold. And He gave to his Disciples the Spirit of Prophecy, and of working Miracles likewise. All which we have recorded in the Sacred Writings of the New Testament, deliver'd down to us by the Church, and sealed by the Blood of Martyrs, and believed in the World; in which there hath been made a mighty change thereby, notwithstanding the Opposition that hath been made thereto by the combined Powers of Earth and Hell.

Q. What use are we to make of this, that Jesus Christ is that great Prophet that should come into the World?

A. The plain use of it is this, That we are accordingly bound at our peril, to receive him as such, to hearken to him, and to submit to his Teaching, and to follow his Conduct and Direction, *Deut.* 18. 18, 19. *John* 17. 5. and 3. 19. and 8. 12. and 14. 6. *Col.* 2. 3. *I Cor.* 1. 30. *Heb.* 2. 1, 2, 3. And the Apostles of Christ speaking to us from him, and by his Commission, we are accordingly to receive their Doctrine and Testimo-

ny, as the Doctrine of Christ Jesus, *Gal. 1. 11, 12.*
2 Pet. 1. 16. *1 Cor. 11. 23.* and *15. 3.* *Luke 10. 16.*
1 Thes. 4. 8.

And this Doctrine being contained in the Holy Scriptures, we are to fetch our Information thereof from them, and search diligently into them, and make them the Rule of our Faith and Practice, *John 20. 31.* *Act. 20. 32.* *1 Pet. 1. 22.* *2 Tim. 3. 16.*
1 John 1. 4. neither must we follow any other Light or Doctrine, but what is contained therein, *Gal. 1. 11.* But so far as the same is explained and applied in a right manner by the Ministers of Christ speaking in his Name, we must attend to their Doctrine with Love and Reverence, *1 Thes. 5. 12, 13, 20.* and *4. 8.* *Heb. 13. 17.*

And we must not only receive or entertain the Doctrine of Christ contain'd in the Scriptures as meer matters of Speculation for the improvement of our Minds; but we must so assent to it, and mix it with Faith, that it may produce in us strong and active Resolutions of Holy Obedience for the reformation of our Hearts and Lives, without which it will not profit us, *Heb. 4. 2.* *Matth. 7. 21, 24.* *1 Cor. 4. 20.* *Luke 6. 46.* *John 13, 17.* *John 15. 2.* *James 1. 22.* *1 John 2. 23.*

And that we may thus profit by the Word of Christ, we must take pains, and search and meditate therein, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* *Psal. 1. 2.* and *119. 97, 99.* *Prov. 2. 2.* and *8. 34.* And we must earnestly beg the Illumination and Assistance of the Blessed Spirit, to clear up Divine Truth to our Minds, and to impress it upon our Hearts, *Eph. 1. 17, 18.* and *3. 14, 16, 17.* *1 Cor. 2. 10, 12.* *Job 32. 8.* *Psal. 119. 33, 34, 35.* And we must labour to be of Humble, Contrite and Broken Hearts, *Psal. 25. 9, 12.* *Isa. 61. 1.* And we must labour to mortify all our carnal

nal and Worldly Lusts, which cloud the Mind and distract the Spirit, and stop the Heart against the reception of Spiritual things, *Matth. 13. 15, 22. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.* And we must be truly conscientious and careful to live up to the Teaching, we have already received, *John 7. 17. and 14. 21. Prov. 2. 7, 9. Rom. 1. 21, 24.*

Q. Did our Saviour also execute the Office of a Priest?

A. Yes: For as because of our blindness and ignorance that came upon us in our fallen state, we had need of Instruction and Revelation from God, to direct us in the way of Truth. So because of Man's Sin there was no less need of a Sacrifice for Propitiation. For Man having sin'd, by transgressing the most just and righteous Law of his bountiful Creator, and Sovereign Lord, which he could not plead ignorance in excuse of, nor any hard usage to provoke him to; he thereby became guilty before God, and was therefore justly liable to the threatned Punishment of eternal Death, and everlasting separation from God. But if this Penalty had been executed, the whole Race of Mankind must have been lost for ever. And the Glory of God's Goodness in making Man had been lost too, in the ruin of the chief of all his visible Creatures. And yet Man was no way able to prevent this, by offering a recompence for the Sin that he had committed, or to make satisfaction to God's governing Justice for the escaping of the Punishment. Nor was any Creature besides able to do it for Man. For *it was not possible that the blood of Bulls and Goats, should take away Sin,* *Heb. 10. 4.* And yet it being the wisdom of Governors to preserve and maintain the Honour and Dignity of their Government, and the just Repu-

tation of their Laws, and not suffer them to be trampled upon by the Sinners Impunity, It is expedient that some course should be taken for the prevention hereof for the vindication of his Honour.

Here therefore God from his mere undeserved Grace and Goodness being willing to shew compassion to his Rebellious Creature, the infinite Wisdom and Mercy of God found out an expedient for the advancement of his Free-Grace in the saving of Man, with a Salvo likewise to the honour of his justice; so that at the same time the Holiness of God might be abundantly demonstrated, his exceeding hatred of Sin shewn, his Laws and Government vindicated, the malignity and just desert of Sin fully discovered; so that by the representation thereof, Man might be hereafter deterred from Sin and inclined to a future Obedience.

And in order to this therefore, according to the Counsel of the ever blessed God, the Son of God was sent into the World, to take our Nature upon him, having a Body prepared him for that end, and in the room and stead of the Sinner, to offer himself a Sacrifice for our Sins, and to undergo those Sufferings, which might answer all the aforesaid Ends, as a Mediator between God and Man, *Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26. Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10.* And which by being of a valuable consideration, might be an equivalent to what was threatened to the Sinner, and might as fully answer to all Intentions and Purposes, as if they had been exactly the same, for the preventing and saving us from those Punishments, which we had deserved by our Sins.

Thus

Thus he was both a Priest and a Sacrifice, by offering himself for us, Eph. 5. 2. He gave himself an Offering and a Sacrifice for Sin, of a sweet smelling savour. He was a true and proper Priest, fully answering the description of such a One, Heb. 8. 3. And the Sacrifice, which he offered, was a real and proper Sacrifice; of which the Sacrifices and Sin-Offerings under the Law were but Figures and Types, Heb. 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, 26. and 10. 1. And thus he bore our Sins in his Body on the Tree, 1 Pet. 2. 24. He was made to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, 2 Cor. 5. 21. For God had laid on him the Iniquity of us all, being wounded for our Transgressions, and the Chastisement of our peace was upon him, Isaiah 53. 5, 6. And thus God was made propitious to us, and we have reconciliation with him thro' this Sacrifice offered for us, Heb. 10. 10, 11. And therefore he is said to be our Propitiation, 1 John 2. 2. so that there is no need of any other Sacrifice or Satisfaction, nor yet of Repeating this, Heb. 1. 3. 1 John 1. 7. Heb. 9. 28. and 10. 1, 2, 10, 14.

And by vertue of this Sacrifice, He being now ascended into Heaven, there he appears in the presence of God for us, and becomes our Advocate and Intercessor with the Father, Heb. 9. 12, 24. 1 John 2. 1, 2. So that there is no other Mediator or Intercessor besides him, nor any need of any other, 1 Tim. 2. 5. But by him alone we come to have all Blessing, being delivered by him both from the Guilt, and in a great measure from the Power of Sin, and hereafter shall perfectly be so, if we believe in him as we ought, Eph. 3. 7. Heb. 9. 14. and 10. 10, 14, 16, 17. For we may fully and certainly conclude, that His Sacrifice was fully accepted, and the Ransome paid; be-

cause God raised him from the Dead, and set him at his own Right-hand in Heavenly Places, being a Priest and King for ever after the Order of *Melchizedek*. *Heb.* 5. 9, 10. and 6. 19, 20. and 7. 27. and 8. 1, 2. *Rom.* 8. 34. and 4. 24, 25.

Q. What use are we to make of this Doctrine concerning our Saviour's Priesthood?

A. It is a great and eminent demonstration to us, of the exceeding evil of Sin, and is therefore a just Motive to deter us from it; that it could not be expiated but in this extraordinary manner, by the Sacrifice of the Son of God in our Nature, who dy'd for our Sins, to deliver us from Sin and Wrath; and was himself made a Curse for us, to redeem us from the Curse due thereunto, *Gal.* 3. 10, 13. *Rom.* 6. 6. It sheweth us how angry God is with Sin, and what a terrible Indignation he bears against it, and so is a strong engagement to us to the study of Holiness, which it was the very end of Christ's coming and death to promote, *2 Cor.* 5. 15. *Ephes.* 5. 25, 26. *Col.* 1. 21, 22. *1 Pet.* 2. 18. and 3. 18.

This withal is a ground of strong Consolation to us, and of Faith and Hope in him, for the obtaining of the pardon of our Sins, and the acceptance of our Persons, Prayers and Services before God, under all our Fears and Burdens, and Dependancies, *Heb.* 4. 15, 16. and 10. 10, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Eph.* 3. 12. *Rom.* 8. 33, 34, &c. and 5. 1, 2, 3. But we must look unto God for Salvation only through him, upon the account of that all-atoning and all meritorious Sacrifice, that he hath offered for us; *2 Cor.* 5. 19. *Rom.* 5. 10, *1 John* 1. 7. *Eph.* 1. 7, 11. *John* 1. 29. *Heb.* 9. 26. And therefore we must not depend upon any merits of our own, or look unto any other Saviour, *Eph.* 2. 8, 9. *Rom.* 11. 6, 7. *Luke* 17. 10. *Job* 35. 7. *1 Tim.* 2. 5, 6. *Acts* 4. 12. *Heb.*

Heb. 7. 25. *1 Cor.* 1. 13. *Mat.* 25. 9. *Gal.* 6. 6. But yet we must not continue in Sin, in confidence of our acceptance through this Sacrifice, *Jude* 4. *Rom.* 6. 1, 3. *Tit.* 2. 11, 14. and 3. 5.

To despair of Pardon and Salvation by Christ, though Men are willing to receive him and to come up to his Terms, is to despise Christ and the Offering that he hath made for Sin; it is to suppose, there is some Sin, that is above the Merit of his Blood to atone for; and that his Sacrifice is insufficient to the end intended; when there is abundant Merit in his Blood to atone for all, *1 Job.* 1. 7. But yet for Men to embolden themselves in Sin, from the Sacrifice he hath offered for it, is to make Christ the Minister of Sin, contrary to the end of his coming and suffering and dying, and is to turn the Grace of God into Lasciviousness, *Tit.* 2. 14. And it is to separate the Work of Redemption by the Son, from the Work of Sanctification by the Spirit, which must always go together, *Titus* 3. 5, 6.

Q. And is our Saviour also a King?

A. Though our Saviour appeared in a low and mean estate and condition in the World, and not in the royal Pomp and Grandeur of a King, which did not suit the spiritual design of his Kingdom; which the *Jews* not considering, through a prejudic'd Notion they had entertained of the Messiah's being to be a temporal Prince and Deliverer, were offended at him: yet he was born a King, *Luke* 1. 32. and 2. 21. *John* 18. 37. According to the Prophecies that went before of him, *Psal.* 2. 6. compared with *Acts* 4. 25. *Isa.* 9. 6. *Ezek.* 37. 24. *Dan.* 2. 44. And therefore he was called *Messiah the Prince*, *Dan.* 9. 25. For being the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, *Rev.* 13. 8. This was of old designed for him, and at length

length was conferr'd upon him, as a Reward of his great Sufferings in bringing about the Salvation of Man, to the praise of the glory of God, *Phil.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Heb.* 2. 9. all earthly things being beneath the merit of his Sufferings, and the dignity of his Obedience.

But this Kingdom was but begun, and was much hid and obscured in his state of humiliation in the World; in which there was only some initiation of his royal State; and he was a King rather in designation and right, than in possession; and carryed himself more like a Servant, than One that was endow'd with Royal Majesty. And yet in this State he sometimes exerted his Kingly Power, by giving Laws to his Church, and establishing the same by his Royal Sanction of Rewards and Punishments, *Matth.* 5. 6, 7. And by shewing his Power over all Creatures, and all the Powers of Nature, *Matth.* 8. 23, 30, 31. And giving us various Instances thereof in his miraculous cure of Diseases. And his Dominion also over Death and the Grave, to dissolve its Bonds, *John* 11.

And we find afterwards that all Power was committed to him, so that He is made the Head over all, *Matth.* 28. 18. And Angels and Principalities and Powers are all made subject unto him, and are ministring Spirits sent forth by him, *Phil.* 2. 9, 10. *Eph.* 1. 20, 21. *1 Pet.* 3. 22. *Heb.* 1. ult. *Col.* 2. 10. And so are evil Angels no less under him, and under his Power, and Government and Jurisdiction, *Col.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 2. 14. *Matth.* 8. 31, 32. And the greatest Potentates and Kings of the Earth are the Subjects of his Dominions, *Isa.* 44. 28. and 45. 1. and 49. 22, 23.

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By this Kingly Power, with which he is indow'd he settled and ordained a Ministry for the conduct of his Church, *John*. 20. 21, 22, 23. *Eph*. 4. 8, 11. And he hath promised to be with them with his Spirit and Presence, *Mat*. 28. 20. And he is still building up, and defending and providing for his Church, *Zech*. 6. 12, 13. So that all the Powers of Earth and Hell shall never throughly prevail against it, *Matth*. 16. 18. *Isa*. 31. 4, 5. And though his Kingdom was at first, but like a grain of Mustard-seed, or like a little Leaven, yet it shall increase and grow, *Matth*. 13. 31, 33. *Isa*. 49. 19, 20. And we according to his promise look for new Heavens, and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness, 2 *Pet*. 3. 13. Thus this great King is carrying on his Work by degrees; according to the dispensation of Times appointed by the Father, till the end shall come. He still rules in the Faithful by his Spirit, that dwelleth in them, *Rom*. 14. 16. 1 *Cor*. 3. 16.

And He is still carrying on his Gospel, which is the Ministration of the Spirit from Nation to Nation, till at length all Nations, and People, and Languages shall be subdued unto him, *Rev*. 14. 6, 7. and 11. 15. *Dan*. 2. 44. and 7. 14, 18. And the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, *Rom*. 11. 25. *Luke*. 21. 24. And he shall have the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession, *Psal*. 2. 8. *Isa*. 54. 1, 2, 3. and 60. 1, 2, and 66. 19. And then shall the Covenant with *Abraham*, of which there hath been so long an intercession, be remembered again, and the natural Branches grafted into the true Olive-tree, *Gen*. 17. 7. *Rom*. 11. 15, 16, 24, 25, 26. *Ezek*. 39. 25. *Isa*. 11. 11, 12. and 60. 9, 10, 19, 20. *Hos*. 3. 4, 5. *Rev*. 7. 4, &c. And this mighty King will subdue all the Enemies that oppose these things, by degrees; and partly
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by the Sword of his Spirit, and partly by his Sword of Vengeance, he will bring down all the Antichristian Powers, the Beast, and the false Prophet, tho' for a while they seem to prevail without controul, *Rev.* 17. 1-14, 16, 17. and 18. 2, &c. and 19. 5, 6, 7, 17, 19, 20.

And then at last comes the final Act of the Mediatorial Kingdom of this Great King, in his Conquest over Death itself, when he shall come with Power and great Glory to Judge the World, and render to every one according to his Works, *Jen.* 15. 24, 25, 26. *Rev.* 20. 12, 13. *1 Thes.* 4. 16, 17. *John* 5. 22. And when all this shall be over, then the Mediatorial Kingdom shall expire, all being finish'd that was to be done by it; and God shall be all in all, *1 Cor.* 15. 28.

Q. What may we learn from Christ's being thus a King?

A. We must see that we honour him as such, that we reverence his Authority, submit to his Government, and render obedience to his Laws, that we may not provoke him to exert his Royal Power in executing Vengeance upon us, as he will certainly do at last upon all those that continue in their Rebellion against him, tho' he seem for a while to bear with them, *Job.* 5. 22, 23. *Rom.* 14. 7, 8, 9. *John* 13. 13, 17. *Phil.* 2. 10. *2 Thes.* 1. 7, 8. *Luke* 19. 27. *Jude* 15. 2 *Pet.* 3. 9, 10. *Psal.* 2. 10, 11, 12. *Eccles.* 8. 11, 13. *2 Pet.* 2. 9. *Isa.* 3. 10, 11.

But here is great ground of comfort and rejoicing to all that are the willing and faithful Subjects of this Great King, who hath all Power in his Hands, and from whom they may expect Grace and Help in all their Wants, Exigencies and Necessities, if they apply themselves to him, and depend and live by Faith upon him, *Phil.* 4. 12, 13, 19.
2 *Cor.*

2 Cor. 9. 8. and 12. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 8. Matt. 7. 7. John 14. 13. And we should therefore rejoyce in his Government, and not fear the Church's Enemies, nor all the Power of Earth and Hell, that shall combine against it; being assured of this, that not the deepest Councils, nor the greatest Strength can prevail against this King of Saints; but the Church at length shall be finally victorious over all its Enemies, thro' his mighty Power, Psal. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Mic. 7. 16. Isa. 41. 14. and 51. 11, 12. and 54. 4, 5, 6, 11, 17. and 33. 19, 20, 21, 22. Jer. 30. 15, 16, 17. Isa. 31. 4, 5.

But these things may not presently come to pass, and therefore it is our Duty to wait for the accomplishment of the Promises and Prophecies of these great good things, to wait with Patience, with Prayer and Supplication, and in the use of lawful means on our part, and not by hasty and unlawful Methods of our own devising, think to precipitate Providence, nor yet grow weary in well-doing, nor turn aside to the Tents of the Enemies, Isa. 30. 18. Hab. 2. 5. Heb. 10. 35, 36, 37, 38.

And we must see that we do not censure this great King of the Church in any of his Administrations, or in any of his intermediate Dealings, before the full time of the fulfilling of all things shall come. He is gone forth conquering and to conquer, and in his Majesty doth ride prosperously, and will accomplish all in due time, if we can have patience to wait for it. But the Ways of God are a great Deep which it is not for us to fathom, Psal. 18. 11. Eccl. 8. 16. and 11. 5. We cannot presently know what God doth, but we must be sure he will do always that which is right, John 13. 7. Job 34. 12, 18, 19. Psal. 89. 14. and 25. 10. But when we receive any dispensations of Mercy, either to the Church

Church in general, or to ourselves in particular, we must always give God the glory by Jesus Christ, who is the grand Administrator of all, *Eph. 1. 3. &c.* and *5. 20.* *Heb. 13. 15.* *Col. 3. 17.* *1 Pet. 2. 5.*

Q. What are the Relations that our Saviour is described by in the Creed?

A. They are Two: The one relating to God the Father, as he is **His only Son**; the other to us, as he is **our Lord**.

Q. How is our Saviour the only Son of God?

A. He is called the *Son of God* in Scripture, in several respects: As he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, by the immediate Power of God, without a Human Father, *Luke 1. 35.* As he was sent, and anointed to the Office of the Messiah, in all its Parts and Branches, *John 10. 36.* *Acts 9. 20.* As he was begotten again of God, when he raised him from the dead, *Acts 13. 33.* And as he was appointed Heir of all things, *Heb. 1. 2, 5.*

But in none of these respects can he be properly said to be, or called the *only Son of God*, because he was the Son of God before any of these Notions of it could take place; forasmuch as the World was made by him, *Heb. 1. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11. 12.* And he is said to be God's *only begotten Son*, *John 1. 14, 18.* and *3. 18.* which is a term of exclusion to exclude all others from being his Sons so, as He is; when yet others have been, or shall be the Sons of God upon these accounts also; as *Adam* was the Son of God, produced by God's Immediate Power, without a human Father too, *Luke 3. 38.* And others have been immediately by God appointed and set apart to the same kinds of Offices, of Prophet, Priest and King. And others also wait for the Adoption, even the Redemption of their Bodies, by a blessed Resurrection, which they shall partake of in time,

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Rom. 8. 23. Phil. 3. 21. And all that are God's Sons or Children by a special Adoption, are Heirs also, Rom. 8. 15.

But there is an higher and more noble Sense than that of all these, in which he is said to be the *only Son of God*, or God's *only Begotten*, viz. As he had the Divine Nature communicated to him in a mysterious manner, by an eternal Generation, whereby He is of the same Essence with the Father, God of God, God as the Father is God, in eternal and perpetual Union with him without division of Substance, and yet without confusion of Person, and so is equal to the Father in respect of his Nature or Godhead; tho' in respect of receiving his Essence from the Father, as the beginning and root of the Divinity, he is after him in order, and so in subordination to him.

And for the confirmation of this, we have the Name and Nature of God ascribed to him, *John* 1. 1. and 20. 28. *Rom.* 9. 5. *1 Tim.* 3. 16. *1 John* 5. 20. *Phil.* 2. 6. *Col.* 2. 9. *Acts* 20. 28. And so also the Divine Attributes; as *Omnipresence*, *Matt.* 18. 20. *Matt.* 28. 20. *John* 3. 13. *Omniscience*, *John* 21. 17. and 2. 24, 25. *Rev.* 2. 23. *John* 16. 30. *Luke* 6. 8. *Omnipotence*, *John* 5. 19. *Rev.* 1. 8. And the same form of Speech, in which the *Eternity* of the Father is described, is also spoken of him, *Rev.* 1. 4, 8, 11, 17. and 22. 13. *Isa.* 44. 6. and 9. 6, 7. *Prov.* 8. 22. And so also the Works of God, of Creation and Preservation, *John* 1. 3, 10. *Colos.* 1. 16. *Heb.* 1. 2, 10. with *Heb.* 3. 4. And therefore also the same Worship and Honour is requir'd to be given to him in equality to the Father and to himself, *John* 5. 22, 23. *Heb.* 1. 6. *Revel.* 5. 13. And Prayer made to him, *Acts* 7. 59. *1 Cor.* 1. 2. Faith and Hope in him, alike with the Father, *John* 14. 1. *Psal.* 2. 12. Blessing

Blessing in his Name, 2 Cor. 13. ult. And we are devoted to him in Baptism, in the same manner, and in equality with the Father, Mat. 28. 19. And we find that when the *Jews* charged him with making himself equal with God, he no way excused it, but rather asserts his equality with the Father in doing all things, and that he is to have the same Honour with him, tho' in subordination to him, as having receiv'd all from him, *John* 5. 18, 19, 20, 23. And asserts himself to be one with the Father, *John* 10. 30. As the Apostle also doth, 1 *John* 5. 7.

Q. But was it needful, that He that was God himself, should become the Saviour of Men?

A. It was what Man, who was now by his Rebellion become guilty before God, could never have expected or desired, or proposed, that He who was the offended Majesty should seek the recovery of his own Rebellious Creatures. But the Condition of Man was such in his lapsed State, that none but God himself could deliver and save him, *Hos.* 13. 9, 4. *Isa.* 43. 11. and 59. 16. and 63. 5. For that threefold Office of Prophet, Priest and King, being now according to the Infinite Counsel and Wisdom of God, to be executed in order hereunto, the Necessity of Man requiring the same, and being what the Vindication also of the Glory of God did require in part, there was none that could perform that Work, which was contain'd in those Offices, but only He, who was God himself. And therefore God himself in his infinite Mercy undertook the same for us, as he in his infinite Council found it most expedient to do.

He thought it most expedient himself to reveal himself to us, to teach and instruct us in our Duty, to shew us what Worship and Service he required of us, and what we might, in the performance of
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our Duty required, expect from him, and by our omitting or acting contrary thereunto, fear at his Hands, that we might be thereby the more convinced and satisfy'd of the Revelation he had given us, and might be engaged so much the more to take heed to his Commands, Promises and Threatnings, *John* 1. 18. *1 Cor.* 2. 11. *John* 15. 22. And in this consisted the Work and Office of a Prophet.

And then it being necessary also according to the Divine Council; that a Sacrifice should be offered, and Sufferings should be undergone, that should be of a valuable consideration to make an Atonement and Compensation for Man's Sin, to satisfy God's governing Justice, and to vindicate his Holiness, and to answer the ends of a Government hereafter, that Man might for the future be more deter'd from Sin, in the doing of which consisted the Office and Work of a Priest; and there being no other Sacrifice that could be of valuable consideration to these ends, there was none but he that was God, that could offer a Sacrifice of this nature, and therefore he also undertook it, *Heb.* 10. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Heb.* 9. 26.

And as for the Office and Work of a King, in making of Laws, and executing of Judgment, in the punishing or rewarding of Men, in subduing of them to himself, and subduing their Enemies to them, it was plainly needful, that he that should do this, should be both Omniscient and Omnipresent, which none but God is. It was needful, that he should be Omniscient, that he might be perfectly acquainted with our Natures, might give Laws suitable to them, and then discern the Obedience and Disobedience even of our Hearts and Thoughts;

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the Soul being the principal part of Man, and the Mind and Heart the principal Subject of the Divine Government. And this is God's Prerogative alone, *1 Kings 8. 29. Rev. 2. 23.* And what must it be less than an Almighty Power, that is to govern all Men, and to reward and punish them according to their Works, and by the promise and threatening thereof, to enforce Obedience upon them, and to engage them thereunto? Man is govern'd here very much by the Intervention of Nature, and natural things; therefore Nature itself, and all Creatures and all Events must be govern'd too with respect to Man, and all invisible Beings govern'd to the same purpose: And who should do this, but He that is the Omniscient Creator, and Lord of all?

Q. But was it needful that the Son of God should be engaged in this great Work of the Redemption and Salvation of Men?

A. If God alone can be the Saviour of Man, it must be one or other of the three Persons in the Godhead, that must be specially engaged in the Work of Redemption, in the execution of these Offices, as a Mediator between God and Man. But it could not be congruous or fit, that the Father himself should undertake this Work. For he being the first in the Order of the Trinity, was the first also in the Creation of Man, and so was the Law-giver, and the first that was offended by Man's Sin and violation of the Law, and he could not be a Mediator with himself; and yet such a one sinful Man stood in need of, to make Peace between God and Man: And therefore there must be another Person, different from himself, to undertake the Mediation between Man and himself.

And

And yet it could not be proper neither for the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Sacred Trinity.

For in the Mediation between God and Man, there were two things principally that were to be done for his Recovery. There was to be besides a Promulgation of the Divine Will, and enacting of the Laws, a sacrifice offer'd, and thereby a Compensation made for the breach of the Law, and a Price of Redemption lay'd down, to procure Man's delivery out of Prison, upon certain Conditions to be performed by him. And then there was to be light given and strength and power conveyed to Man to enable him to perform these Conditions, and to resist all Temptations, and to mortifie all Lusts that would hinder his doing the same, that upon such performance the Benefits of Redemption might be applyed to him. But the Redemption itself must be first in order, and go before the application; and therefore it was fit, that ~~that~~ should be perform'd by that Person that was first in order next to the Father, and the Light and Grace and Power, for the application, should be by the third; it being most fit, that the Order of Operation in Mans recovery should be according to the Order of the Persons in the Sacred Trinity; so that the Sacrifice should be offered by the second, and the other things that were needful for the application, should be done by the third, as working or sent by him. Whereas if the Holy Ghost had been the Redeemer, He that had been the third in the Order of the Trinity, had been the second in operation; and if the Son had ~~had~~ the Work, that was needful, for the application lying upon him, he that was the second in Order, had been the third in Operation; and so

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the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son, had been before the Son, and the Son must have received of the Spirit to accomplish the Work. And if the Father himself had come to do this, he must have been sent by the Son and the Holy Ghost. And thus the Order in the Sacred Trinity had been inverted, whereas it is proper to the Father to send the Son, and not the Son the Father. And it was proper for the Holy Ghost, that proceeds from both, to be sent by both, and not for the Son to be sent by him.

And thus the Order of the Operations of the three Persons is preserved according to the Order of their Being. Creation is first, together with Legislation, and so is first, and properly, the Work of the Father. Redemption is the second, and goeth before the Application, and so that is the Office of the Son, the second Person. And that which is done for Application, is the third, in order of Operation, and so belongs to the Holy Ghost, the third Person in order; and yet all the three Persons are engaged in the Redemption and Salvation of Man. The Father appoints and sends the Son to be the Redeemer; the Son accepts and willingly undertakes the Work, in the discharge of his three-fold Office; and then the Spirit, as sent by him, inwardly directs and enableth for the performance of those Conditions, which are necessary for the application of the Redemption wrought, and of the Benefits that flow therefrom: Of which more afterwards in the Article of the Holy Ghost.

Q. What may we learn from the Son of God his engaging in, and performing this Work of Redemption for us?

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A. By this we may see the desperate State that Man was fallen into, that no less than he that was God could redeem and save us. This is an Argument that our Sins were very heinous, and our Misery was great, that there must be so great a Person to undertake for us to remove the Guilt, and to rescue and deliver us. If Angels, if any Creature could have done this for us, this extraordinary Person, we may be sure, had not been engaged in it, 2 Cor. 5. 14.

By this we may see the exceeding wonderful and inexpressible Love of God, that when there was need of it, He *spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up for us all*, Rom. 8. 32. Here was such Love, as *passeth Knowledge*, which we have ever cause to admire *the breadth and length and depth and height of*, Eph. 3. 18, 19. 1 John 4. 9.

And considering the Excellency and Dignity and Power of this Divine Person, there is withal a just foundation for our Comfort, and for a strong Faith and lively Hope in him, for the attainment of Salvation by him. For we may be well assured, that he hath fully accomplish'd what he hath undertaken, and will do what remains. For being God, we cannot doubt, but he hath compleatly discharged what he came about, and is *able to save to the utmost*, all that come unto him, and therefore that we ought fully to trust in him, *John* 14. 1, and 10, 28--30. *Isa.* 26. 4. *Psal.* 125. 1.

And such being the Wonder of Divine Love, that Infinite Excellency should so condescend, that the Deity itself should stoop to so low an Office for us, which is more than if all the Choir of Angels had done it: As this calls for our greatest Admiration and Love, so also for an intire devotedness to

him, to seek his Honour and to glorifie his Name,
Phil. 1. 21.

Q. What is that Relation to us, by which our Saviour is here farther described?

A. That He is our Lord; which we are therefore bound to acknowledge, 1 Cor. 12. 3. And that He is so our Lord, that there is no other besides him. For there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, 1 Cor. 8. 6. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, Eph. 4. 5. One is your Master, even Christ, Matth. 23. 8. who is Lord over all, Rom. 10. 12. Lord of all, Acts 10. 36. Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, Rev. 19 16.

Q. How is Christ our Lord?

A. He is Lord together with the Father, by right of Creation, as all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made, John 1. 3. Because by him are all things, 1 Cor. 8. 6. For by the Word of the Lord were the very Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth, Psal. 33. 6. By this he hath a Propriety in all things, and a Right to the Government of them, and a Dominion over them; and so hath a Right to all the Powers, Talents and Capacities, that we are endued with.

But besides this, He hath also another Right to us, by vertue of that Purchase which he made of us, by giving himself a Ransome, and laying down the Price of Redemption for us, when we were before in a Captive State, 1 Tim. 2. 6. Having by the Price, which he has paid, which was his own most precious Blood, which he shed for our Sins, redeemed us from the Power of Sin, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. From the Curse of the Law, Gal. 3. 12, 13, 14. From Death, Heb. 2. 9, 10. and from the Devil's Claim,

Claim, as the Executioner of God's Justice, there being satisfaction made to God himself the chief Governour thereby, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* And also by Power, making a Conquest of all our Enemies; so that tho' they still continue and may persist in their Assaults, yet they are grown but feeble Foes, and their Power is gone, in comparison of what it was, and we may be sure to conquer, if we will resist, and make use of that strength that is given us, *Coloss. 3. 15. James 4. 7. Ephes. 6. 10, 11.* And Death it self shall be finally conquered at last, *1 Cor. 15. 55. Rom. 8. 11. Phil. 3. 20, 21.* Sin intirely destroyed, and all Perfection come in the room of it, *Ephes. 5. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 13. 10-12.* And wicked Men and Devils shall no more disturb the Church, then raised to its triumphant State, by their Errors, Deceptions, Persecutions for ever, *Rev. 20. 10.*

Q. What are we to learn from hence ?

A. We must see, that we ever own and acknowledge this Lord, *John 13. 13.* And accordingly submit, and give up ourselves to him, as his faithful Servants, to do his Will with all readiness of Mind, and must consecrate ourselves *entirely* to his Service, *2 Cor. 8. 5. Rom. 12. 1.* We must glorifie him with all we have, as his Creatures, and as his Redeemed Ones, *1 Cor. 5. 20.* And we must acknowledge no other, nor serve any other Lord, as Supream over us, but him, *Matth. 23. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 7. 23. Matth. 6. 24. Acts 4. 19. Isa. 26. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2.* We must bow ourselves to him, and lay out our selves wholly for him, in the use of the Powers and Strength we have, *Phil. 2. 10, 11. Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9.* And whilst we are imployed in his Service, we should intirely trust in him

for Provision and Support, who, we may be sure, will evermore defend and stand by his Faithful Servants, and will assist and strengthen them, and will never leave them, nor forsake them, *2 Tim.* 4. 16, 17. *2 Thess.* 3. 2, 3. *Phil.* 4. 13. *1 Cor.* 10. 13. *Isa.* 43. 1, 2. *Heb.* 13. 5. But if we own him only by Profession, and Complement him never so much with this Name and Title, and do not the things that he Commands, he will never own us, *Luke* 6. 46. *Matth.* 7. 21.

SECT.

S E C T. V.

Of our Saviour's Humiliation.

Q. YOU have given an account of our Redeemer's Name, Offices and Relations, whereby He is described in the Creed. Now what is that which followeth there, concerning him?

A. They are such other things, as were either necessary to qualifie and fit him for the full discharge of his Offices, for the carrying on and completing the Work of Redemption undertaken by him; or else are some special Parts thereof, which are most necessary to be known and believed by us. And are all contain'd in his Estate, either of Humiliation or Exaltation.

Q. Wherein did the Humiliation of the Son of God, our Redeemer consist?

A. In his becoming Man, and in his Suffering and Dying for us. The former being necessary to qualifie him for the latter, and the latter being one necessary and special Part or Branch of his Undertaking and Office, for the bringing about Man's Salvation.

Q. Did the Son of God then also become Man, to qualifie him farther for the Office of a Redeemer to us?

A. Yes. This is the great and amazing Mystery, and an Instance of the most astonishing Condescension, that God was manifest in the Flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. That He, who being in the form of God, and thought

it no robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men, Phil. 2. 6, 7. Thus when the fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 4. 5. God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live thro' him, 1 John 4. 9. Thus the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, John 1. 14. He that had a Being, not only before Abraham, John 8. 58. But was with the Father before the World was, John 17. 5. And was the Lord from Heaven, 1 Cor. 15. 48. He came from above, John 3. 31. Came forth from the Father, John 16. 27. to take upon him humane Nature. He that was from the beginning, from everlasting, or ever the Earth was, Prov. 8. 23. Whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of Eternity, Mic. 5. 2. Margin. He was conceived and born of a Woman in time.

And that which increaseth the Wonder is, that he came into the World thus, without any manner of worldly Pomp, not as a Prince in a high Estate, but in a low Condition. He was brought forth in a Stable, and laid in a Manger, for want of better Accommodation. And it appears withal, that he not only took our Nature upon him, but also all the Innocent Infirmities of it, whereby he shewed himself no less to be true Man, than that he was true God, being in all things made like unto us, but without Sin, Heb. 4. 15. He grew up by Degrees to the Stature of a Man, as others do, Luke 1. 52. He was hungry and thirsty; He eat and drank and slept as we do; He was faint and weary, and needed the assistance of his own Creatures, for the support of his bodily strength, John 4. 6, 7. Matt. 4. 2. He

He sorrowed and rejoiced ; He wept and was grieved, and had the same touches and feelings of Compassion, the same rowling of his Bowels in any extraordinary Commotion of Grief and Trouble, *John 11. 33. 35. Luke 19. 41. Luke 10. 21. Matth. 15. 32. Luke 7. 13.* The Consideration of all which may well confound our Minds, and fill us with Wonder and Amazement, that this high and glorious Person should thus condescend and abase himself for us.

But yet for the greater support of our Faith under all this Meanness, there were some Circumstances attending our Lord's coming into the World, both before and after his Birth, that bespeak him to have been an extraordinary Person, who was designed to do great things for us, and whom therefore we ought to have a great regard to. As the Angel Gabriel's appearing to *Zecharias* the Priest, to give notice of the Birth of *St. John Baptist*, to be his Harbinger and Forerunner, to go before him in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord, *Luke 1. 17.* The same *Zecharias* stricken with Dumbness for his Unbelief of the Message, *Vers. 20.* And his being filled with the Holy Ghost, and his Prophecy afterwards concerning the design of his coming, *Vers. 67.* The Angels appearing also to the *Virgin Mary*, to acquaint her with the Miraculous Conception that she should have, *Vers. 26, &c.* And the appearance of one of these Holy Messengers to *Joseph*, who was espoused unto her, about the same Matter, *Matth. 1. 20.* To the Shepherds, *Luke 2. 8.* The Prophecy of *Holy Simeon* and *Anna* about him, *Vers. 25, and 36.* The Appearance of a Star to the Wise Men in the East, to conduct them to the Place of his Birth, *Matth. 2. 1, &c.*

Q. How

Q. How was it, that the Son of God did become Man?

A. He was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, and Born of the Virgin Mary. His Mother, it is said, before *Joseph* her espoused Husband came to her, being found with Child of the Holy Ghost, *Matth. i. 18.* which is to be understood of the Power and Efficacy of the Holy Ghost. The Matter of his Body was of the Substance of his Mother; but the manner of effecting it, was by the supernatural Activity and Power of the Holy Ghost alone, without any Humane Concurrence, above the Order and out of the way of Nature, *Luke i. 35.* So that his Mother having no Knowledge of any Man, in order to his production, was together both a Virgin and a Mother, as any other Woman is Mother of the Child that is Born of her. And by having this Virgin *Mary* for his Mother, who was of the Lineage of *David*, it appears he was the true Seed of *Abraham* and *David*, prophesied of by the Prophets, *Jer. 23. 5, 6. Matth. i. 1. Rom. i. 3.* Having a true Humane Body, like unto us, *Luke 24. 39. 1 John 4. 2, 3.* And a Body being thus prepared him of the Substance of the Virgin, a true, reasonable Soul also breathed into it, *Matth. 26. 37, 38. Luke 23. 46.* So that he was made like unto us in all things, only without Sin, *Heb. 2. 17. cap. 4. 15.*

And thus the Son of God, by becoming Man, was God-Man together, the true *Immanuel*, perfect God and perfect Man; God of the Substance of his Father, having the Divine Nature from all Eternity from him by an eternal Generation; and Man of the Substance of his Mother, born in time; God in humane Nature, not by Conversion of the Divine Nature into the Humane, nor yet by confounding

ing the Divine and Humane together, and making them both one, but by uniting the Humane Nature to the Divine in one Person. So that our *Jesus* is not God only, or Man only, but both God and Man in two distinct Natures, united with an unconfounding Union in one Person, and both in this one Person are *one Christ*, 1 Cor. 8. 6. For the Deity being unchangeable, could not be confounded with, or changed into the Humanity. Infinite could never become Finite, nor Finite Infinite. But here are two Natures wholly distinct, and yet intimately united by such a Union as is incomprehensible; so that the Natures are two, and the Person one.

Our Saviour therefore is not one Person as God, and another Person as Man, but is both God and Man in one Person, and so is but *one Christ*; as it is in that which is commonly called the Creed of *St. Athanasius*, and yet not that *by Conversion of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God*; not by confusion of Substance, but by assuming the Humane Nature to the Divine, in *Unity of Person*; the Humane Nature never having a Subsistence of its self, or by itself alone, but being in its very first Conception and Formation united to the Divine, in the Second Person of the Sacred Trinity.

And this is necessary to be believed by us, because this is the reason why his Sufferings, and the Sacrifice that he offer'd, became of that Infinite Value, as to be a full Satisfaction for the Sins of Man, and had that infinite Merit in them, to obtain all that good for us which it has done. It is because that the Blood which he shed, was the *Blood of God*, or of him that was God, *Acts 20. 28.* or because He that was God, *laid down his Life for us*, 1 *John 3. 16.* It was the Lord of Glory that was crucified,

eified, 1 Cor. 2. 8. It was a Divine and Infinite Person that suffer'd; the same Person that was the Son of God, that was Conceived by the Holy Ghost and Born of the Virgin Mary, and was crucified, dead and buried, and so continueth ever one and the same; whereas if he had been one Person as Man, and another as God, His Sufferings then would have been only the Sufferings of a finite Person, and being such could not have been of that infinite value as they are; on the Consideration of which, our Faith and Hope and Comfort is in a great measure founded.

Q. But was it needful then, that He that was the Son of God, should thus become Man also to save us?

A. Yes. By having these two Natures wholly distinct, and yet thus intimately united in the one Person of the Son, He is become just such a Mediator, as was needful for so great a Work, and for the discharge of all the Offices undertaken by him, which had not been proper to have been executed by him, that was either God alone, or Man alone.

For God to speak immediately to us from the Battlements of Heaven, would be terrible, *Exod.* 20. 19. And therefore in condescension to our Infirmities, that he might not frighten us with his Terrors, he speaks to us by his Son incarnate in our Nature, *Heb.* 1. 1. And thus as Christ, as a Prophet sent from God, teacheth us with the greater Authority, as he is God, and reveals the Father and his Will clearly to us; so as Man, he teacheth us in a more familiar manner and agreeable to our Natures; and also gave us a Pattern of Obedience in himself; it being of mighty consequence, that a Prophet or Teacher should go before others in Practice

Office of his own Doctrine, to encourage and engage others to the observance thereof; which yet, as God alone, he could not have done, had he not been in our Nature, and made like unto us.

And by having both Natures, he is better qualified to discharge the Office of a Priest too. For thus He had both a Humane Nature, and a Divine Nature to sustain the Humane in its Sufferings, and to give value to them; one Nature to become a Sacrifice, and another to make the Sacrifice of a sweet Savour with God, and a sufficient Propitiation for us. A Nature whereby we may be assured of his Capacity and Ability to help us in all Conditions, as God; and another whereby we may be assured of his having a just Pity and Compassion to us, having felt in himself our Necessities. So that upon both Accounts we may have full assurance and confidence in him, and may come with boldness to him, *Heb. 2. 14. and 4. 15.*

And then as King also, being Man as well as God, he can better apply himself to Man; and we may be the better satisfied, that he gives us suitable and proper Commands; and that his Government shall be dispens'd with an equal Sweetness, as Majesty.

Q. But why was it needful, that the Son of God should become Man in this extraordinary manner, by being conceived by the Holy Ghost?

A. It was, that he might be free from all Taint and Corruption, which in the ordinary way of Generation, our Natures must needs be infected with. *For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* But he that was to save us from Sin, tho' he was to be made like unto us in all things else, yet he was to be without Sin; for such an High Priest became us, *Heb. 7. 26, 27.* He was to be of the Seed of the Woman,

Woman, because he was to be of Kin to us ; and yet he was to be without Sin himself, that he might be an acceptable Offering for it. For this end the conception and forming of him, was to be the Work of the Holy Ghost, that there might be none of the Seeds of any Corruption in him, or of the least irregular Passion, Appetite, or Inclination. If he had had a corrupt Humanity, it could not have been a fit Habitation for the blessed Deity ; nor could the Divine Nature take and assume to itself what was tainted and defiled ; nor could such a one have been a fit Redeemer to us, but would have stood in need of Redemption himself. But the Humanity being wholly untainted and unstain'd by means of this miraculous Operation, it is become a fit Residence for the Divinity ; and the Sacrifice thereof that was offer'd for us, a proper Sacrifice for the purging away of our Sins.

Q. What may we learn from all this Doctrine, of the Son of God his becoming Man for us, to save us ?

A. We may be hereby instructed about the great and Inestimable Value of our Immortal Souls, and of their eternal Salvation, and consequently of that care that should be taken of them by our selves. This being the Design, in Subordination to God's Honour and Glory, of this Condescension of the Son of God, to bring about. And therefore well may we look upon it as a Matter of the greatest weight and moment, and should *give all diligence to work out our own Salvation.*

And it is a Lesson to us of the greatest Humility, Love and Charity towards our Brethren, that are of the same Original and the same Mold, and consequently in that respect in an equality with us, be their Estate and Condition otherwise never so mean
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and low in the World. If the Son of God doth so condescend to us, we should not think it much to condescend to the lowest Offices, that may be suitable for us, whereby we may profit others, *Phil. 2. 3, 4. Rom. 12. 16.* And we should labour to transcribe the same Spirit of Love and Charity that was in Christ Jesus, *1 John 4. 11. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Col. 3. 12, 13. Ephes. 5. 2.*

And here is a just ground to build a strong and lively Faith upon, for the full accomplishment of our Salvation by this Jesus; He being a most wonderful Person, so as never any one was, or can be besides, and thereby admirably fitted to be a Mediator, a middle Person to mediate between God and Man, and to respect the Interest of both, so as to design and act intirely for God's Honour and Man's good; so that we may have firm Confidence in him, and the Father thro' him, for the accomplishment of that Work that was undertaken by him; He having so much Power and Merit together, as God-Man, to effect it, *1 Tim. 1. 15. Rom. 8. 32, 33, 34.* And thus being in our Nature, and thereby knowing what Humane Nature is by his own sense and feeling, and being acquainted with our Temptations, He having the Compassion of a Man, and a fellow-feeling with us of our Infirmities, as well as he hath the Knowledge and Power of a God, we may be sure He will have Compassion upon us, in all our Difficulties, Straits and Weaknesses, *Heb. 4. 15.* And he that is our Brother being to be our Judge at the last, we may certainly expect fair and compassionate dealing from him, if we submit to him, *Acts 17. 31. Isa. 11. 2, 3, 4.* when yet those that are his Enemies, and continue in a State of Opposition to him, after all the demonstra-

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tion of his Kindness and Grace made to them in vain, must expect from him the most severe Dealing for the abuse of his Patience and Love, *Luke* 19. 27. and 20. 17. *2 Thess.* 1. 8.

This being an instance of such amazing Love in the Son of God to us, that may well confound our Minds, and fill us with Admiration, that ever he should so condescend to us; it may well be expected as a just Homage from us, that we should with all Expressions of Gratitude, celebrate and praise his Name; and should joyn with the Heavenly Host in Hymns of Thanksgiving, *Luke* 2. 13. And as the Shepherds did, *Verse* 20. But that our Gratitude may be exprest aright, we must consider the end of this his appearance in the World, which was to *destroy the Works of the Devil*, *1 John* 3. 8. to purge and save us from our Sins, and to engage us to lead a new Life, *Matth.* 1. 21. *Mal.* 3. 1, 2, 3. *Tit.* 2. 12. And therefore we must take heed, when we celebrate his appearance in the World, that we do not indulge our selves in Sin and Folly, which is a direct contradiction to the end of his coming. But we should take care, that our Joy and Gladness should be pure and holy; we should not express it by Rioting and Luxury, by Revelling or Intemperance. But our very Feasts and Merriments should be tinged with Piety, and managed with Sobriety, and for the preserving of Charity and good Neighbourhood, and not for the cherishing of Vice and Extravagance.

Q. What is that other thing, in which our Saviour's Humiliation consists, and is one special branch of his Undertaking and Office?

A. It is his Suffering and Dying for us; which, considering the great Dignity and high Excellency of his

his Person, and our littleness, vileness, and unworthiness, for whom all this was done, is much more wonderful and astonishing still, and may well transport us into Raptures of Admiration and Amazement. Yet thus it was, as it is here expressed: **He Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was Crucified, Dead and Buried,** in that Humane Nature which was taken to him into Union with the Divine. This great and glorious Person, for our sakes came into the World, without any outward Pomp or Splendor, being Born of a Woman, who tho' of the Royal Stock of *David*, yet then was but of a poor Family, as appears both by her Offering, and being Marry'd to one of an ordinary Trade, *Luke 2. 24.* with *Lev. 12. 18.* *Matth. 12. 55.* And as soon as he was Born, his Life was sought, and he was forc'd into Banishment into *Egypt*, with his Mother, *Matth. 2.* When eight days were accomplish'd, he was Circumcis'd, as the other Jewish Males were, *Luke 2. 21.* He lived a Life of Meanness, being brought up to the Trade of a Carpenter, the Trade of his reputed Father, *Mark 6. 4.* Thus He was like a Root out of a dry Ground, without form or comeliness, *Isa. 53. 2.*

And when he came to shew himself to *Israel*, tho he was follow'd by some, yet it was for the most part by Fishers and mean People, *Matt. 4. 18.* But he was despised and rejected of the most, *Isa. 53. 3.* He was in the Wilderness forty days tempted of Satan, *Mark 1. 13.* He was all his Life time after, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief, *Isa. 53. 3.* He was Poor, and had not an House of his own, where to lay his Head, but lived upon the Alms of others, Certain Women ministred to him of their Substance, *Luke 8. 3.* and *9. 58.* *2 Cor. 8. 9.*

And tho he was of the most innocent Life, and went up and down doing good, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom for the good of Men; yet his Name was cast out by the most, as a *Gluttonous Man, and Wine-bibber, and a friend of Publicans and Sinners*; because, as the Physician of Souls, he conversed with them, *Luke 7. 34.* As one that had a Devil and was mad, *John 10. 20.* As one that cast out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils, *Matth. 12. 24.* Thus he was the reproach of Men, and despised of the People, enduring still the Contradiction of Sinners, *Psal. 26. 6. Heb. 12. 3.*

And at last He fell into most bitter Agonies, and he began to be sorrowful and to be very heavy, so that he Sweat withal, and his Sweat was as it were great drops of Blood falling down to the ground, *Mat. 26. 37, &c.* The Divine Nature of the Word, to which his Humanity was join'd only to add Dignity and Worth to his Performances and Sufferings, being at the same time quiescent in him; and the Father, tho still pleased with him, *John 10. 17.* Yet withdrawing the Light of his Countenance, and hiding his Face from him; and the Holy Spirit which was poured upon him above measure, to enable him to perform his several Offices, yet then affording him no farther comfort and support, than was necessary to keep him from Sin and Despondency under his heavy Pressures.

And the Hour being now come for the power of Darkness to prevail for a while, that the Devil might bruise his Heel, he was betray'd by one of his Apostles, and was apprehended and led away to Judgment, when another of his Apostles deny'd him, and all forsook him and fled, *Matth. 26. 56, &c.* And then they sought false Witnesses against him to put him to Death,

Death, Matth. 26. 59. And he was accused and condemned as a *Blasphemer*, Verse 65. And as a *Traitor and Rebel that perverted the Nation*, Luke 23. 2. And the Multitude in rage against him, cried out, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*, Luke 23. 21.

Then Pilate who sat as Judge upon him, *deliver'd him to be Crucified*, Matth. 27. 26. And the Soldiers *platted a Crown of Thorns, and put it upon his Head, and put a Reed in his Hand for a Scepter, like a mock-King; and they blindfolded him, buffeted, scourged, and spit upon him.* And at last he was Crucified between two Thieves, having his *Hands* and his *Feet* nailed to the Cross on which he hung, consuming and melting away in bitterness of Spirit, under the sense of the Sins of Men, which he undertook to expiate; and at length crying out, (*as one stricken and smitten of God, when it pleased the Father himself thus to bruise him and to put him to Grief*) *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, be yielded up the Ghost*, Matth. 27. 46, &c. Isa. 53. 4, 10. Thus He died, and laid down his Life willingly, for no Man could take it from him, *John* 10. 17. And then moreover He was buried, according to the Prophecy, *Isa.* 53. 9. which is added here chiefly to shew the certainty of his Death, and that his Resurrection, which was to follow, was true and really such.

And this Suffering and Death is here said to be under *Pontius Pilate* the Roman Governour, under the *Emperor Tiberius*; to fix the Time of his Suffering, according to the Prophecy of *Daniel*, 490 Years before, *Dan.* 9. 26. and to shew according to *Jacob's* Prophecy, that the Messiah now must needs be come, *Gen.* 49. 10. and to account for the manner

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of Christ's suffering Death by Crucifixion, that being a Roman and not a Jewish Punishment. All this our Saviour underwent for our Sins, having no Sins of his own, *Rom. 4. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 3. Heb. 9. 26, 28. 1 Pet. 3. 18. and 2. 24.*

Q. But was it needful, that our Saviour should thus suffer and die for us upon the Cross?

A. This indeed seem'd strange and ridiculous to the Heathen Philosophers, and also to the Jews, who had taken up a Notion of the Messiah's being to be a Temporal Prince and Deliverer to their Nation. Thus the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 1. 23. We preach Christ Crucified, to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* And the Disciples themselves at first did not understand that this was the design of his coming, being carried away with the same Prejudices that the rest of their Nation were, *Luke 18. 34.* But our Saviour after his Resurrection opening to them the Scriptures, shewed them, that *Christ ought to have suffered these things, Luke 24. 26.* And thus Saint Paul alledged in his Preaching, that *Christ must needs have suffered, Acts 17. 3.* He being delivered up by the determinate Counsel and foreknowledge of God, to this end and purpose, *Acts 2. 23. and 4. 28.* This being one chief and great design of his coming, to make expiation for Sin, by the Sacrifice of himself; offer'd in our stead, *Heb. 9. 26-28.* As the Sin-Offerings under the Law were put to Death, as a Commutation for the Sinner. And to this end our Saviour was Crucified, according to the Types and Prophecies that went of him, *Gen. 22. 6. Numb. 21. 9. John 3. 14. Zech. 12. 10.* Because that was accounted an accursed Death, by suffering of which therefore he was to deliver us from the Curse that was due to us, *Deut. 21. 23. Gal.*

3. 12. And thus, *those things which God had before shew'd by the Mouth of his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, be both so fulfilled, Acts 3. 18.*

For Man having sinned, and thereby being made liable to the threatned Punishment of eternal Death, *either* all Mankind must perish eternally by the execution of that Sentence, which when the Wisdom of God would prevent, his Pity and Goodness interposed to put a stop to; *or else* Man himself, in order to his Deliverance, must make satisfaction to God for the violation of his Law, which he was no way able to do, having nothing by which he could make a sufficient Recompence for his Sin; He having no power or right to offer up other Creatures for such an end, they being not fully his own; and being also all too little and below Man, if he had such a Right, they being too cheap a Price for Man's Redemption, and not sufficient to answer the ends of Government, and to deter him from future Transgression, *Heb. 10. 4. Psal. 49. 7, 8. or else* at length God must forgive Man's Sin and Rebellion, without any suffering or satisfaction at all; and then the Holiness of God, and his heavy Indignation against Sin would not have sufficiently appeared, nor the Honour of his Laws, or Justice of his Government vindicated; and Man might still have conceived hopes of a continued Impunity from God's gracious Nature, however he might transgress against him: *Or else* lastly, which only remains, some equivalent satisfaction must be made by some other in Man's stead, as a Piacular or Propitiatory Sacrifice, which might answer all the aforesaid ends. And this the Wisdom of God pitch'd upon, and was done by the Son of God in our Nature, to render the Divine Majesty placable to

us, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Forasmuch as *without shedding of Blood there is no remission*, Heb. 9. 22. But now Christ having thus given *himself a Ransom for many*, Matth. 20. 28. And having *purchased us with his own Blood*, Acts 20. 28. And we being *bought with a Price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *We have Redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveness of Sins*, Ephes. 1. 7.

And yet besides this too, there are other great ends of our Saviour's appearance in that humble State, and of his suffering and dying for us, that he might thereby confront the Pride, and Vanity and Fantasy of the World, that value nothing almost but ease and carnal Pleasure, and Wealth and Greatness; that he might convince Men, that these are not the chief things, nor most valuable in the sight of God; but that God may love those whom he afflicts, and the Innocent and Virtuous may be in Poverty and Reproach and Sufferings, and yet may be in God's favour still.

And moreover, that his Sufferings and Death might be an Instrument of the Mortification of Sin in us, and engage us to Holiness of Life, Gal. 1. 4. 6. 14. Ephes. 5. 25, 26. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 24. and 3. 18. Rom. 6. 10, 11. It being a means admirably adapted for this end, by shewing the exceeding evil of Sin, and God's great Wrath against it, and our just desert of Punishment for it; by setting before us Christ's unspeakable Love to engage us to him, and to his Service, John 15. 13, 14. 1 John 5. 3. And the right he hath to our Obedience, by virtue of this Redemption wrought for us, Phil. 2. 8, 9. Rom. 14. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 17, 18. And by his giving us an example herein, of the most eminent Graces, of Humility, Contempt of the World, Meek-

Meekness, patient resignation to the Will of God in the hardest Cases, and of loving our Enemies and forgiving Men their Offences against us, 1 *Pet.* 2 21, &c. Whereas if our Saviour had appeared in a great and high State, and never suffered, we had wanted an Example of many suffering Graces. And tho' as a Temporal Prince, he might have had more Hypocrites and servile Converts to follow him; it would not have tended to make Men more inwardly good and vertuous, which was the great design of his coming.

Q. What then doth this Doctrine of our Saviour's suffering and dying for us teach us?

A. This is a Matter of such an astonishing consideration, that we ought with Admiration and Wonder to stir up our selves to keep up a grateful remembrance thereof, and inure ourselves betimes to sing the Song of the Lamb that was slain, and hath done and suffered such great things for us, *Rev.* 5. 12. *Ephes.* 1. 3, &c. when there was nothing on our part that could engage him to it, when there was no obligation upon him, to pity us, or to excite in him the Bowels of his Compassion towards us, to repair our Ruins, or to raise us out of our Misery; but we had deserved the quite contrary from him, and had incurr'd the Penalty of Eternal Death, which he might have executed, *Rom.* 5. 6--20. And could no way help our selves by our own Power or Vertue; nor could ever do any thing hereafter, by which he should receive any advantage from us, *Mic.* 6. 6. *Psal.* 50. 8, 9. And were but little things of our selves, and He past by the Angels that fell, *Heb.* 2. 16. We may well therefore be engaged to the highest admiration and thankfulness, and to love him with all our hearts, so that no Friends,

no Relations should be preferred before him ; neither Honours, nor Pleasures, nor Profits, nor any Advantages whatsoever, *Matth. 10. 37, 38. Luke 14. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Ephes. 6. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 22.*

All which should be shewn by our readiness to deny ourselves, to the utmost Sufferings, if we should be called thereunto for his sake, *Matth. 16. 24. Phil. 3. 6.* And by our earnest and great concern for his Honour and Glory in the World, and for the Interest and Growth of his Kingdom, and the propagating of his Truth and Gospel, observing his Ordinances in remembrance of him, and keeping holy his Day, and the promoting his holy Religion according to our Capacities and Stations, against the profane mockery of Atheists and Deists, Popish Idolatries and Superstitions, and the foul invasion of his Rights by that Man of Sin ; and in opposition to all the Satanical and Antichristian Kingdom, *2 Cor. 6. 17. 2 Thess. 2. Matth. 12. 30.* But especially by mortifying all Sin and Lust in our selves, and making use of his Death and Sufferings as an Instrument and means to further this Mortification, which was so much the design of his Sufferings, and to engage us to do his Will and keep his Commandments, with an holy readiness and zeal, *2 Tim. 2. 19. Rom. 6. Tit. 2. 12. 1 John 3. 8. Acts 5. 31.* And then we may encourage ourselves in him, for the obtaining of Mercy and Forgiveness, under the sense and burden of our Sins, *Rom. 8. 33, 34. Ephes. 1. 3, 7. Rom. 3. 25. Rom. 5. 9, 10, 11.* And under all our Afflictions and Sufferings, and under the Thoughts and Fears of Death it self, now the Sting of it is taken away by him, *Rom. 8. 35. Heb. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 55. John 11. 25.*
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John 5. 26. And may have a comfortable and well grounded expectation of all that is good for us, *Rom.* 8. 32. *Matth.* 6. 33.

Q. *How is that to be understood that followeth, that He Descended into Hell?*

A. It cannot be meant of the Burial of his Body, which was mentioⁿd before, though Hell be sometimes in Scripture taken for the Grave, *Gen.* 42. 38. *1 Sam.* 2. 6. Nor of the place of the Damned, and of his Sufferings farther there; though Hell also be often so taken, *Mat.* 5. 22, 29, 30. *Mal.* 10. 28. He having finish'd all his Sufferings on the Cross, *John* 19. 30. But of the place whither his Soul went in its State of separation, which he call'd *Paradise*, *Luke* 23. 43. And to that end, when he died, commended his Spirit *into the Hands* of his Father, *Verse* 46. So that this is here added, to signifie to us the disposal of his Soul in that State, during its absence from the Body, *Acts* 2. 31. And to shew us, not only that he had a Body that was buried, but that he had also a Human Soul, capable of existing separately from the Body. Which also on the third day did actually descend into the Grave, to be again reunited to his Body.

Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That He being made in all things like unto us, and of the same Nature with us, only without Sin, we also have Souls that shall exist in like manner, in a State of separation from the Body. And therefore that it highly concerns us, to get our Souls so purified, whilst they are in the Body, that when they come to be separated from it, they may be in that *Paradise*, or Place of good Souls, whither our Saviour's Soul then passed,

fed, and where he promised the Believing Thief should be with him, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And therefore we should now also glorifie God in our Spirit, or with our Souls, 1 Cor. 6. 20. And we should love God with all our Soul and with all our Mind, that our Souls may be prepared for the injoyment of him, Matth. 22. 37. and 5. 8. And labour and pray, that we be sanctify'd wholly; and that our whole Spirit, and Soul and Body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. 5. 23.

SECT.

S E C T. VI.

Of Christ's Exaltation.

Q. W Herein doth our Saviour's Exaltation consist, in which he also carrieth on the Salvation of Men?

A. First, In his Resurrection.

Secondly, His Ascension.

Thirdly, His Glorification.

Fourthly, His coming to Judgment.

Q. Did our Saviour rise again then, after he was dead and buried?

A. He rose again the third Day from the Dead. He being restored to Life again on that Day, by the re-union of his Soul with his Body, which had been before separated for some time; so that the Grave was no longer to contain him, according to the Prophecy, *Psal. 16. 10. Acts 2. 31.* And this Work is sometimes attributed to God the Father, and his Holy Spirit; to raise from the Dead being no less the effect of a Divine Power, than to give Life at the first, *Acts 2. 32. Gal. 1. 1. Ephes. 1. 19, 20. Acts 13. 30. Rom. 8. 11.* Sometimes it is attributed to Christ himself; whereby it appears also, that He is God, and so as God concurred thereunto, *John 2. 19. and 10. 17, 18.* And this was done on the third Day, being that Day on which he himself foretold that he would rise, *Matth. 16. 21. John 2. 19, 20.* According to the Type that went of it before, *Jonas 1. 17. chap. 2. 20. Matth. 12. 40.*
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For he was put to Death on our *Friday*, lay all *Saturday*, which was the *Jewish Sabbath*, in the Grave; and rose again the first Day in the Morning, commonly called our *Sunday*, which according to the Computation of the *Jews*, began also the Evening before, *Matth.* 27. 45. and 28. 1.

Q. What proof or evidence is there of Christ's Resurrection, that may sufficiently justify our belief of it?

A. This is indeed the Foundation, upon which the whole Fabrick of our Religion is built. For as the Apostle himself alloweth, *1 Cor.* 15. 14. *If Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith is also vain; and we are found false Witnesses of God; and ye are yet in your Sins; and they which are fallen asleep in Jesus, are perished.* All is Imposture, the whole Gospel is a Fable, and the Christian Religion is a perfect delusion: And therefore it must be acknowledged, that there ought to be good evidence and proof thereof. And such indeed there is.

For if his Body continued still in the Grave, when there was such a Dispute about it, why did not his Enemies shew it? That would have effectually convinc'd all Men, that the report of his Resurrection was a false relation, and a meer invented Story. But this they never so much as pretended to do, nor do his Opposers at this Day pretend, that it was done. And if it was gone, and was not there, what became of it? How was it removed, or by whom? If he was not risen again, it must then be taken away, either by stealth or violence. But a great Stone was rolled to the Mouth of the Sepulchre, and a Guard of *Roman Soldiers* was set to defend it, which we may be sure, they thought sufficient for the purpose, to prevent his Disciples coming to take him away. And to pretend

tend in these Circumstances, that whilst all the Guard was fallen into a deep Sleep he was stoln away, is down right ridiculous. And that he was taken away by violence, was never so much as pretended. Nor is it to be imagined, that his Timorous Disciples that fled from him when he was apprehended, would run the risk of such an Adventure, against a Guard of armed Veterans. Nor could they propose to themselves any end in it. And if they had done it, that would have been the same confutation of his Resurrection, as if his Body had been shewed still to be in the Grave, and yet it is plain, his Body was gone. And when neither of these Accounts have any thing of reason in them, no stealth, no noise, nor any thing of fighting proved; it therefore only remains, that he must be risen again.

And yet besides this reasoning about it, we have the Testimony also of many positive Witnesses, who knew him well before he was Crucified, who did see and feel, and eat and drink with him, and several times convers'd with him afterwards. And this made them so confident in the report thereof, 1 *John* 1. 1. He first discovered himself to *Mary Magdalen*, for her great love to him, and concern about him, *Mark* 16. 9. *John* 20. 14. And to her and others again, *Matth.* 28. 9. To the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, *Luke* 24. 15. To *Simon* by himself, *Luke* 24. 34. To the ten Disciples when *Thomas* was absent, *John* 20. 19. And eight Days after to the Eleven, *verse* 26. To Seven Disciples at the Sea of *Tiberias*, *John* 21. 1. Then to five hundred Brethren at once, 1 *Cor.* 15. 6. And after that to *James* and all the Apostles again at *Jerusalem*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 7. And at his Ascension into Heaven, *Mark* 16. 19. Thus he shewed himself by many infallible

ble Proofs, Acts 1. 3. And these we find were not credulous Persons, nor at first forward to believe, because of the surprizing strangeness of the thing, which they little expected, *Mark* 16. 11. *Luke* 24. 25. *John* 20. 25. But being thereby convinc'd of the matter, away go his Disciples, and publish the same in all Places; they were bold and confident in their relation, notwithstanding the most violent opposition which they met with, and without any encouragement from the World, and stood to their Testimony to the very Death, which unless it were true, they could propose no end in. And besides this, they wrought many Miracles in most Places wherever they came, to shew their Mission from Heaven, and for the Confirmation of the Doctrine which they deliver'd. And they that did all this, shewed themselves in their Preaching, and Writing, and Lives, to be good and holy Men, true and sincere, without all sinister Design, Pride, Vain-glory or Covetousness, Lovers of God, inflamed with Zeal for the promoting of true Religion, in opposition to all Sin, Lust and Licentiousness.

And their Doctrine was received and believed in a little time by innumerable Persons, under all the Opposition and Discouragements it met with, and made a mighty alteration in the World, above whatever was ever done before, from the meer evidence of the truth thereof; when there was neither Learning, Arts, or Arms in the Publishers, to induce or enforce it; nothing to bribe their Followers, no hopes of Riches, Honours, or Preferments before them; but instead thereof Disgrace, Persecutions and Deaths were continually attending them.

Q. But

Q. But how are we sure, that these Things were so?

A. We have had a faithful Record made of them by plain and honest Historians, who wrote the Account thereof most from their own Knowledge, being Eye-witnesses of the same, about that time when those Facts were done, and publish'd the same in the Face of all the World, to be tryed and examined by all; and have shewn all the Characters of truth in their Relations, delivering no absurd or senseless Matter, but what is grave, natural and credible, and impartially relating the Fears, Sorrows and Infirmities of their Master himself, which they might have conceal'd, with all the Disadvantages that attended him from his Poverty, Obscurity, Meanness, Contempt of the People, especially the ruling part. And with the same impartiality relating the meanness of his Followers, their Ignorance, Dulness, Prejudices, Quarrels between themselves, and other Miscarriages; which designing Men, that write in favour of a Party, would not have done; and they set out the Facts that they relate, not in gross only, but with their various Circumstances and Places where they were done.

And this their Record in these Books, it appears, hath been faithfully preserved, by having innumerable Copies taken of them, and handed down by the Church and dispersed through the World, and translated into many Languages to that end for the use of all Nations; and yet it appears to this Day, that the various Readings, which must needs be unavoidable without a continual Miracle, and infallible guidance and assistance given to every Transcriber, do not make any considerable alteration in any point of Faith, or matter of moment. And these Writings do withal contain such Doctrine, and of

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that elevated Nature, that is, above the view, not only of plain and illiterate Men, as they mostly were that publish'd the same, but of the learned also, by the meer Power of Philosophy or Reason. And it also appears, that there is an effectual Power that goes along therewith, which is felt by those that carefully study them, for the reforming of their Spirits and Lives, and endowing them with all Virtue and Goodness, correcting their Errors, and subduing their Passions, and planting in them Piety, Charity, Humility and Purity.

Q. But why was our Saviour raised to Life again, from the Grave?

A. Because it was not possible, that he should be holden of it, Acts 2. 24. He having by his dying and lying in the Grave so long as he did, fully answered the Ends of his so doing, and having withal Life in himself, and the Promise of a speedy Resurrection, John 5. 25. Psal. 16. 8. And it being necessary that he should rise again, to carry on the Work of our Salvation, which he had begun; which without this we could never have hoped for from him. His Resurrection being to be the Foundation of our Faith, Hope and Comfort of all our Confidence in him and Duty to him.

This is a plain evidence to us, that his Death had accomplish'd its end in respect of Almighty God, which was to make satisfaction and atonement for our Sins; that the Price was fully paid, that God had accepted the same, and was well pleased with the Performance; and the Debt being cancel'd, for which he was cast into the Prison of the Grave, He had now a discharge from it, and was no longer to be held therein, *Rom. 4. 25. and 8. 33, 34.*

And

And it is a Pledge and Assurance to us, of the Resurrection of those that are his Members, and that have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, who may be sure, that when their Head is risen, they shall not be left behind; but that He is risen as the First-fruits, which shall certainly be follow'd with the full Harvest of the Resurrection of all his, *1 Cor. 15, 12, &c. Rom. 6, 5-8. and 8. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 3. 1 Thess. 4. 14. John 6. 39, 40.*

And it giveth credit to his Person, and to all his Doctrine and Promises, evidently shewing his Mission from Heaven, and that He spake with Authority from God, and that His Religion is true and Divine; it being contrary to the Holiness and rectitude of God's Nature, to give such a Testimony to an Impostor, *Rom. 1. 4.* And therefore this he appealed to, as the great confirmation of his being the Messiah, and gave this as the most convincing sign thereof, *Matth. 12, 39, &c. John 2. 18. 22.* And it is a good ground of assurance to us, of his full Authority, Power and Ability to accomplish our Salvation, and to finish all that remains to be done in order thereunto, *Acts 17. 31.*

Q. What use then are we to make hereof?

A. Tho' this sheweth, that the Price of our Redemption is fully paid, and that God is thereby made placable to Sinners, and hath accepted the Sacrifice and Atonement to that end; we must see that we do not abuse it, by expecting an absolute Pardon from God, without performing the Conditions on our part. But we must see, that we be conformable to his Death, by our dying to Sin, and to his Resurrection, by our rising again to newness of Life and Holiness, without which, we cannot actually expect the benefit of either, *Rom. 6. 6, &c.* And accordingly this is expressed, *Heb. 9. 13, 14.*

And then it is that God is actually reconciled to us, and we shall be pardoned and saved by him, *Rom. 5. 10. 1 John 1. 7.* And this is absolutely necessary, that we may partake of a blessed Resurrection by him; and upon this supposition we may confidently expect it, *Rom. 8. 11.* But then we must see withal, that we raise up our Affections to heavenly things, and that we mortifie our earthly Members, and that we seek those things that are above, *Col. 3. 1, 5.*

And the consideration of his Resurrection, as it gives credit to his Person and Doctrine, should make us adhere firmly to the Christian Religion; because by this we know certainly, that it is of God. And therefore we should live as becomes his faithful Disciples, and as obedient Subjects to him, and see that we keep his Commands, and firmly depend upon the making good of his Promises, knowing what a Saviour we have to trust in, and stand in awe of his Threatnings and of his fiery Indignation.

Q. What is the next thing to be observed, concerning our Saviour's Exaltation?

A. After he had shewed himself to his Disciples, and often convers'd with them, to confirm them in the belief of his Resurrection, and to instruct them farther in the things concerning the Kingdom of God, for the space of forty Days at certain times, which he thought a sufficient time for that purpose; at the end thereof **He Ascended into Heaven,** in a visible and triumphant manner, in the Presence of his Disciples, in that very Body in which he suffered, and rose from the Dead, which was now to become glorious and to die no more; a Cloud receiving him, and conveying him out of their sight; which probably was a Cloud of Fire, like *Elijah's* fiery Chariot, or the Divine Schechina, in which
God

God was wont to appear with a magnificent Retinue of flaming Seraphims, as he appear'd on Mount Sinai. For we are told by the Angel, he is to come at last *in like manner* again; and that will be *in flaming fire, with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theff. 1. 8. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. Acts 1. 9, 10. According to the Types and Prophecies that went of him, Psal. 68. 18. with Ephef. 4. 8. As the High Priest once every Year entred into the Holy of Holies, which signified Heaven, Heb. 9. 7-11, 12.

Q. But what proof or evidence is there of this, that our Saviour did so ascend?

A. Here is the same kind of proof, which we have of our Saviour's Resurrection. The Testimonies of Eye and Ear-witnesses, faithfully reported to us, who publish'd the same with the same assurance as they did the former; testifying it both to *Jew and Gentile*, that God had exalted him, and *set him at his own Right-hand in the highest Heavens, far above all Principalities and Powers, and every Name that is named*, Phil. 2. He shewing himself thus to St. Paul even after his Ascension, which was an evidence to him that he was ascended, 1 Cor. 5. 8. as he had done in like manner before to St. Stephen, Acts 7. 55. This the Apostles in their Preaching, every where averr'd and asserted peremptorily, and continued inflexible in their Testimony, against all the Contempt, and Scorn, and Rage of Men, and the most furious Opposition that could be made against them for it: And no Threatnings, no Racks, no Torments, or Perils, or Death itself, could ever make one of them eat his Words, or to fall off from what he had said, 1 Cor. 4. 9. But they lost all with invincible Patience, and rejoyced that they were thought worthy to suffer for Christ, in nothing shrinking, as if their Composition had been Brats

or Iron, and not human Flesh. And these Witnesses, moreover, were Men of high and exalted Piety, and heroick Vertue, Integrity and Uprightness, which are great Assurances, that they did not follow cunningly devised Fables to deceive.

And besides these Testimonies, we have moreover for the confirmation of our Saviour's Ascension, and of his Advancement to the height of Glory, and Power, and Majesty above, a plain and incontestible matter of Fact, in the accomplishment of the Promise made to them, That after his Ascension the Holy Ghost should descend upon them, *Job. 16. 7. Luke 24. 49.* Which when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, came to pass, as he had said; whereby they who were illiterate Men, and acquainted with no Language besides their own, were enabled to speak with divers Tongues the wonderful Works of God, for the carrying of the Gospel thro' the whole World, which could not have been done without this extraordinary Power bestowed upon them, but by this means was effected accordingly, and was an undeniable evidence of their being endued with such a Power, and at which the People were all amazed, *Acts 2. God bearing them witness also with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, Heb. 2. 4.*

And the strange Progress of the Gospel, by little and inconsiderable means, was an evidence in itself, that the Finger of God was in it, to bring to pass what was prophesied, *Psal. 2. 8. Zech. 9. 10. Isa. 6. 3. Matth. 13. 31.* It flew like Lightning in a little time, and prevailed in all Places, and subdued Nations to it, and brought off Men from their Idolatrous Rites, and made a mighty Reformation in all Places. And yet the Instruments were little generally, and for the most part had no polite Learning,

ing, were not educated in Schools or Academies, had not learn'd the Art of Reasoning or Oratory, or did not use what they had, *1 Cor. 2. 1, 2.* Nor did they fawn upon any, or any ways flatter their Auditors; but they reprov'd their Faults with Zeal, and inveighed against all their prevailing Vices, and charged them home upon them. And the Religion that they preach'd had nothing of Pomp or Gaudiness in it, nothing to court Mens animal Passions; but was that which contradicted their Lusts, and unravell'd all their Notions and Prejudices, which they had been bred up in, and had made a very deep Impression upon them. And they had no Temporal Interests, no Honours or Preferments to propose to their Followers; but forewarned them of Persecutions, which they were to undergo; which accordingly came to pass, *Acts 14. 22. Heb. 11. 36, &c.* And yet they were enabled to go through all; and still the Gospel prevail'd amain, even by their very Sufferings, *Phil. 1. 12, 13, 14.*

And that which still gave a farther confirmation to our Saviour's Ascension, and his being exalted to the right Hand of God, and endued with a mighty Power there, was His taking Vengeance upon the Jewish People and Nation, in that terrible and amazing manner, that it doth not appear in any History, that ever there was any thing like it from the beginning of the World to this Day. All which came to pass according to the exact Prediction of our Saviour, *Matth. 24.* For their horrid Infidelity and Obstinacy, and refusal of him to reign over them, after all the kind and gracious Methods made use of towards them, *Matth. 21. 41-43, 44.* To all which may be added also, the fearful End and Death of the Persecutors and Opposers of the Christian Faith and Religion, in the first Ages: And the

downfal of the Heathen Temples and Oracles, and how they became dumb, as they themselves were forc'd to confess, at the Power and Command of our Jesus.

Q. But why did not our Saviour rise again, and then ascend before the Face of the Sanhedrim, and all the Council and People of the Jews, for the more incontestable confirmation thereof?

A. Because they were a base and unworthy People, a Generation of Vipers, that deserved that he should shew his Indignation against them, and that he should bear no more respect unto them. He spake and preach'd among them, so as never Man did; He went up and down doing good; He wrought many great Miracles to convince them of the Truth of his Mission, and of his coming from God. But nothing would satisfie them; but they shut their Eyes, and hardened their Hearts against all the Convictions that could be offered. And unless they were unreasonably humour'd in their own way, nothing would persuade them, *Matth. 12. 38, 39. and 13. 14, 15.* And probably if this had been done, they would have raised some Cavils against it, as they had done before, at other times, against his other mighty Works, *Matth. 12. 24.* And therefore there was no reason that he should gratifie them any farther, when all other Convictions were lost upon them, *Luke 16.*

And as for the Conviction of other Nations, God would shew, that he had no need of their Testimony for the promoting of his Kingdom, but that he had other means to do it by, and could and would do it, whereby his mighty Power and Glory should be made so much the more to appear, tho' they instead of helping, should oppose it never so much, *1 Cor. 1. 17, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28.* It was enough

enough to satisfie all teachable Persons to select and send forth a certain Number of Men, whom he would endue with Abilities for the same. And those were most meet to partake of this Favour, that had followed him in his Sufferings, and were partakers with him in his Tribulation, & as capable to convince the World of such Facts done, as the most learned Men of them all: And the meaner the Instruments are, so much the more doth the Glory of the Divine Wisdom and Power appear in the Work; that *be that glorieth may glory in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 1. 31.

Q. But is it not a great prejudice against our Saviour's Ascension and Exaltation to this mighty Power, that the Mahometan and other Religions are suffered so to prevail in the World, which are so contrary to his?

A. It is no wonder that this should come to pass, as it did, to be a Scourge to his Churches, for their great and horrible Apostacy in those Places from the true Faith of Christ, and from that Purity of Life and Manners, which at first was their Glory. For after a while Heresie and Schism and Profaneness quite altered the Face of the Church. And they who before were as *Nazarites*, purer than Snow, and whiter than Milk, who were more ruddy in Body than Rubies, and whose polishing was of Sapphire, their Visage, after a while, became blacker than a Coal, and it could not be known in the Streets, that ever they had been the Followers of Jesus. And therefore our Lord was provoked at length to leave those Places, in a great measure, where he had planted his Church, and to lay them open, or leave them to the Delusions of Deceivers; because they *received not the Truth in the love of it*, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. Rom. 1. 23, 24. God never leav-
eth

eth Men till they leave him, as the *Jewish Nation* divers times did, *Judges* 2. 14. And therefore for their Infidelity, at last were quite *broken off*, *Rom.* 11. 20. But when there comes to be a general Corruption, and Infidelity prevails, and no Fruit brought forth but wild Grapes; then God is provoked to leave his People and his Vineyard, and to translate his Kingdom to others, *Acts* 13. 40. *Jer.* 5. 31. *Isa.* 5. 2, 5. *Matth.* 21. 43. It was at this time, when Heresie and Corruption was great in the Church, and when Pride, Grandeur and Luxury were more minded than Religion, about the Year 600. after Christ, that our Lord suffered the *Mahometan* Impostor to start up in the *East*, and to set up a Religion suitable to the Lusts of Men, because they like to have it so; and the Mystery of Iniquity to begin in the Nest, and the Mother of Harlots and Abominations, to seduce the Inhabitants of the Earth.

Not but that God could by his mighty Power prevent these things: But it is reasonable to suppose, that God should deal with reasonable Men in a reasonable way; and when he hath provided them suitable means for their Instruction and Edification, and proper assistances in the use of means, then to let things go on ordinarily in their common course, and to leave Men to try them; and if they will not be purged any longer, to let them alone, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *Rev.* 22. 11. And yet it is to be hoped still, that for the greater Glory of God's Grace, the time will come, when all those Delusions shall be expelled by the Gospel Light, and the more powerful Influences and Operations of the Blessed Spirit, when our Lord shall come with a Spirit of Burning and with a Refiner's Fire; and shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver; and shall first purifie the Sons of Levi,

Levi, and purge them as Gold and Silver, that they offer to the Lord an Offering in Righteousness, and shall be a swift Witness against all the notorious Sinners; and then shall the Offering of his People, of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the Days of old, Mal. 3. 2, 3, 4. Not but that there will be some Tares, and wicked Men, and Hypocrites still in the Church, Matth. 13. 30-49. Christ knoweth his own time best, when all things are prepared, and when it is best, and then he will put an end to all those Scandals and clamorous Objections, that are raised against him.

Q. But why did our Saviour ascend into Heaven, and not continue longer upon Earth?

A. Because he had finish'd his Work, which was here committed to him, to be transacted in his humble and suffering State, both before and at his Sufferings, John 17. 4. and 19. 30. And had also given sufficient proof of his Resurrection, by which he shewed he had finish'd his Work; so that there was no need any longer of his bodily Presence upon Earth. For what remained to be done, was partly to be done in Heaven, by presenting himself there; and what was to be done farther upon Earth, could be transacted by his Ministers sent forth in his Name, and by his Power and Spirit from Heaven, without being with his Body here below; so that the Heavens now must receive him, till the time of restitution of all things, Acts 3. 21.

Q. What were the Ends then, for which our Saviour ascended into Heaven, and for which it was expedient, that he should do so?

A. The first respects Christ himself, that having been perfectly obedient to his Father's Will, even to the undergoing of Death itself, and finish'd the Work upon Earth that was committed to him for his

his Father's Glory; he might now be gloriously rewarded, and recompens'd for his Sufferings, with the height of Honour and Majesty in his Kingdom of Heaven, *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. It being in prospect of this, that he patiently underwent all his Labours and Sufferings here, *Heb.* 12. 2, 3. And his Glory after his Sufferings is therefore to encourage us to patience and self-denial, in hopes also of the like blessed end, 2 *Tim.* 2. 11, 12. Thus our Saviour had hereby a Solemn Inauguration into his Kingdom, for the advancement of his own Glory, and together with this also, for the carrying on his Peoples Salvation, by that mighty Power that was then granted to him; and for the procuring of all things that they might stand in need of; and for the protecting and defending them against all the Power and Malice of their Enemies; and for the sending down his Holy Spirit in that plentiful manner, which was a gift reserved for his glorified State, *John* 17. 39. and 16. 7. Thus he is advanced above all for his Churches good and safety, *Ephes.* 1. 21, 22, 23.

Besides which there was another end also, with respect to us, for the full consummation and accomplishment of his Priesthood, in presenting his Sacrificed Body before the Throne of God, for making continual Intercession in vertue thereof, and thereby obtaining eternal Redemption for us. The Oblation was made upon Earth, and was perfect to the end of Propitiation, for which it was intended, *Ephes.* 5. 2. *Heb.* 9. 25. Yet it was needful to be presented in Heaven, as the Blood of the Sacrifice was carry'd by the Chief Priest, into the Holy of Holies, *Heb.* 9. 24. So now the way into the Holiest of all, is made manifest by his entring therein, *Heb.* 9. 8-12. And thus by presenting himself before

fore the Father for us, and shewing his Offering and Sacrifice there, he is become our *Advocate* in the merit of his Sufferings and Obedience, to answer all Demands that might be made about his People, and to sollicite their Case before the Throne of God in all Ages, *Heb.* 8. 1, 2. *Heb.* 9. 24. *Rom.* 8. 34. *1 Tim.* 2. 5. *1 John* 2. 1.

And there was moreover this Respect had to us in his Ascension, that he might take possession of the Heavenly Inheritance there, as well in behalf of his People, as in his own behalf; Ascending as our Elder Brother to his Father and our Father; as our glorified Head and fore-runner, to give us hope and encouragement that we should follow; and so to give us an assurance of our Ascension and Glorification likewise, if we follow his Steps, and live in Obedience to him, *Heb.* 6. 19, 20. *Ephes.* 2. 5, 6. *John* 14. 19. *Rom.* 5. 10. *Rev.* 3. 21. *John* 17. 24. *John* 14. 1, 2. *John* 12. 26.

Q. What is farther to be observed as a part of our Saviour's Exaltation?

A. That He sits at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty in Heaven. For we find he ascended into the highest Heaven, where God doth in a singular and more especial manner, shew forth his Majesty and Glory, *Ephes.* 4. 10. *Heb.* 4. 11. and 6. 19, 20. and 9. 24.

Q. What is the meaning of this, His sitting there at the Right-hand of God? Hath God a right Hand?

A. It is not to be meant properly: For God being a Spirit, hath no Body, nor bodily Parts; but it is an Expression borrowed from the manner of Men, who count the Place on the Right-hand to be the most honourable; and is to signifie to us, that Christ is advanc'd to the highest Power, Dignity and Authority

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thority under God the Father, *Luke 22. 69. Heb. 1. 3, 4. Acts 2. 34.* So that all Creatures are subject, to him, and are at his beck, *Ephes. 20. 21. Phil. 2. 9. Col. 2. 10-15. Matt. 28. 18.* And by his *sitting at the Right-hand of God*, is signify'd, not his being or sitting there in any one particular posture, *Acts 7. 55.* but, as his having fully ceas'd from all his Sufferings, *Heb. 1. 7.* so his having a full and settled possession of that Power, Dignity and Authority to which He is advanc'd; and that He shall continue to enjoy the same, till He shall have perfectly finish'd the whole Work of our Redemption, in bestowing upon his faithful Servants the Glory and Salvation promis'd to them, and finally destroying all his and their Enemies, *Heb. 10. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 15. 21.* And in the mean time, is in the presence of God, as our Intercessor and Advocate in the Virtue and Merit of his Blood, to obtain all that is needful for the Church; and to send forth his Spirit to guide, direct and sanctify it; and to protect and govern it by his Power; and to subdue its Enemies for the present also, as far as He seeth fit, *Heb. 9. 24. Heb. 7. 25. Rom. 8. 34. Psal. 110. 1, 2.*

And these Words, *The Father Almighty*, here added, seem to imply the truth and fulness of all that Power and Authority to which He is advanc'd; as receiving the same from him, who is the Father Almighty, and therefore hath all Right and Power to bestow the same upon him, *Acts 5. 30, 31. Phil. 2. 7, 8, 9.*

Q. What is the use that we should make of our Saviour's Ascension to, and Glorification in Heaven?

A. Now He is advanc'd to this high Dignity and Power, we must render to him all that Honour and Obedience that is due to him in this high exalted

exalted State; and that we do accordingly fear before him, resign ourselves to him, and submit to his Government and Laws, as having such a supreme Power over all, *John* 5. 22, 23. *Rev.* 5. 8, 9-12, 13. *Psal.* 2. *ult.* And whilst we do thus, and espouse his Interest, and seek his Honour, we may certainly depend upon him for all such Protection and Provision, as He seeth needful for us, and need not fear in the Day of Evil, if He will undertake for us, *Isa.* 41. 14. *Psal.* 35. 9, 10. for we may be sure of this, that as He is possess'd of all this Power and Dignity, He will use it all for his Church's good, and the good of all his Members: He being not possess'd of it for meer shew, but to lay it out as He seeth best for the providing for his People, and for strengthening them, and for saving them from their Enemies, *2 Cor.* 12. 8, 9.

And then by his being exalted, and presenting his Sacrifice before the Throne of God, we may be fully assured of the success of his Mediation, and of a full Atonement made for Sin; and may come *boldly to the Throne of Grace*, tho' we have been guilty before God, *that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in a time of need*, *Heb.* 4. 14. He having withal both a mighty Power and Dominion over all, whereby *He is able*, and a fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, whereby *He is inclin'd* to compassionate us in all our Straits, and Wants, and Troubles; we may be fill'd with Faith, and Hope, and Comfort under all our Wants, Weaknesses and Exigencies; and against all the Fears of Men, Devils, or Death, or whatsoever shall rise up against us, having such a worthy and able Friend always acting for us.

For this presenting of his Body, which now, in its glorify'd State, doth probably still retain the marks

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marks of those Wounds and Piercings that He suffered on the Cross, is a continual Memorial, before God the Father of the Sacrifice that was offer'd by him, for a continual Ratification of the Covenant made with Man, and of all the Promises that are contain'd therein, to our infinite Comfort. And by this it is, that He makes continual Intercession, and *now appeareth in the presence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24. And sits there a *Priest for ever* to that End, *Psal.* 110. 4. *Heb.* 7. 17. And procures the Application of his meritorious Sacrifice offer'd on Earth, by this standing Monument thereof in Heaven, for the compleating of our Salvation; continually obtaining for us Reconciliation with God, whom by our Sins we continually offend. And hereby we have remission of our Sins, and peace with God, *1 John* 2. 1. *Rom.* 4. 25. 5. 10. and 3. 34. and acceptance of all our Offerings and Goodworks, tho' imperfect, of our Prayers and Praises, that are done in his Name, *Eph.* 3. 12. *Heb.* 4. 16. *John* 14. 13. and 16. 23. *Col.* 3. 17. And shall be *saved to the utmost* at last, *Heb.* 7. 25. For this standing Memorial of our Saviour's All-atoning Sacrifice, being presented before God continually, and in his Eye, and with which He is so infinitely pleas'd, nothing that our Saviour asks can be deny'd, but all Effects of it shall be obtain'd for those that are his, *Job.* 11. 42. By this the Holy Spirit is procur'd, and his abundant Grace imparted, with all that Consolation and Protection that is fit for us, and Ability both to suffer and do all Things that are requir'd, *Phil.* 4. 13. *Job.* 16. 7. *Eph.* 4. 7; 8. *Job.* 7. 39. *Luke* 22. 23. *Job.* 17. 15. Therefore we are not only to look on the past Benefits of our Saviour, or to what He procur'd for us by his Sacrifice on the Cross; but also to what He still doth
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by presenting his sacrific'd Body in Heaven for us, that our Faith in him may be strengthened and confirmed so much the more, and we may ever with joy and thankfulness look unto him.

But then we are to consider, That all this is not for all, but only for those that do truly believe in him, and resign up themselves to be govern'd and sav'd by him. For tho' He dy'd for all, to procure for them a Conditional-Act of Grace and Pardon from God upon their Repentance and Faith in him; his Intercession, which is for the Application of this, is not for all. For He hath not an absolute Will to save all Men in general, but those only that are rightly dispos'd, and duly qualify'd, and made meet for it. Therefore it is no where said, that He intercedes or prays for all; but *for them who come unto God by him*, Heb 7. 24, 25. As the High Priest carry'd in before the Lord only the Names of the Twelve Tribes; so our Saviour prayeth only for those, that by Faith become the true Israel of God, *John 17. 9. I pray for them, I pray not for the World.* It being only those, that are born of God by a second Generation, by the Seed of the Spirit, that are fit to partake of all the Benefits of this his Mediation, *John 3. 9. Rom. 8. 1, 13.* whereas others *have the Devil for their Father*, 1 John 3. 8 And therefore we may be sure He prayeth not for such, but against them, because they are his Enemies, and will in time confound them, and make them his Footstool. And therefore none of those, that are yet in their Sins, and under the power of their Lusts, that continue still in their obstinate Impenitence

and Infidelity, can have any benefit or comfort from our Saviour's Intercession.

But then also, seeing He is gone before to take possession of the Heavenly Inheritance for ourselves, as well as himself; it should engage us to ascend after him in our Affections, being well assured, that seeing He is gone thither to inherit Glory, that this World or Earth below, is not the chief part or place of our Happiness, and therefore that it is unreasonable and foolish for us to lie here groveling in the Dust, when our Treasure and Happiness is where he is, *Col. 3. 1, 2, 3. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. and 1. 11. 1 John 2. 16, 17.* And therefore we should give all diligence to prepare our selves to live in that blessed State, to have Communion with him in his Glory, and an everlasting enjoyment of him, which can only be done by our partaking of his Spirit, and being made like to him, *Rom. 8. 8, 9, 10, 11.*

Q. What is the last thing to be observed here, in our Saviour's Exaltation?

A. That from thence, that is from Heaven, He shall come to Judge the Quick and the Dead. Where, by the *Quick*, is to be understood those that shall be found alive upon Earth, at the time of his coming, *1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. 1 Thess. 4. 15.* By the *Dead*, all that had departed this Life before that time, *Revel. 20. 13.*

Q. And will there be such a general Day of Judgment then for all the World hereafter?

A. Yes: We have a full Revelation of this matter in the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, Eccles. 12. 14. Dan. 7. 9. Acts 17. 31. John 5. 22, 25. Matth. 10. 15. Rom. 2. 9,

2. 5, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 9. and 3. 7. Heb. 9. 27. Jude 6. So that this is a fundamental Point, Heb. 6. 2. And there is that, even in Reason itself, and the Light of Nature, which may well incline us to believe it. And therefore we find *Felix* trembled, when St. *Paul* preach'd of it, from the meer concurrence of Natural Conscience with the Apostle's Discourse, Acts 24. 25. And tho' the *Athenians* mock'd at the Doctrine of the Resurrection, as that which was a strange and unheard of thing, yet we do not find they make any exception against this of a future Judgment, they all having some sort of Notion, and expectation thereof, Acts 17. 32, 33.

For God having made Man a reasonable Creature, endued with Understanding and the power of Choice, and therefore capable of moral Government, we may be sure that God doth govern him accordingly. For God doth certainly govern all things according to the Natures that he hath given them. And therefore it must needs be also, that there must be a moral Law, resulting from the very Natures and Relations of things, which God hath obliged Men to consider, and to the Observation of, in the use of those Powers which he hath endued him with, or else those Powers would be in vain. These Laws then are to be the Rule of all Humane Actions, that are under the direction of the Understanding, and the Power of Choice. And if God hath given Men such Laws for Man to govern himself by, it is not to be imagined, but that God, who is the Enacter of those Laws, and Man's Governor, will take notice of the Actions of his Creature, and whether they are ordered in Obedience to

them, or no, when by his Omniscience he can do it. And there being an essential difference between Moral good and evil, as there must needs be in the very Nature of the thing, and in the Laws themselves that are enacted thereupon, and without which they would be of little or no use; it cannot be, but that God from the Holiness of his Nature must needs have a respect to the good, and an hatred of the evil. And supposing that a Providence governs the World, it is reasonable to expect, that God should shew a difference of respect to them, and in his treatment of them, and of Men that practise them. And if there be no other Judgment than what belongs to this World, that this should be constant and steady, and that Virtue and Vice should always be treated after a different manner, or else it would plainly seem, that there is no difference between them, or that God regarded them both alike; and then his Law is vain. But now we plainly see, that there is not this distinguishing treatment here. But there is very often a promiscuous Dispensation of things to good and bad Men, which hath been a matter of great thought and trouble to Men, till they have look'd more forward to what is to come, *Psal. 73. 3- &c. Eccles. 9. 1, 2.*

Tho'tis true, that there are many Advantages that a vertuous Man hath in many Respects above a vicious Man here, so that Virtue itself is indeed part of its own reward; yet supposing there were no other Judgment than what is in this World, this could be said but only of some Vertues, that are contrary to the wasting and ruinous Vices, that tend to destroy Mens Bodies,
or

or to disquiet their Spirits, as all exorbitant Passions do, or that ruine their Estates and Society, and too great niceness in these Virtues would be perfectly needless too. For a Man might allow himself in the practice of some of the contrary Vices, with very little danger or harm; and that would be thought to be such, as the Pleasure or Advantage upon other Accounts, would overbalance perfectly. So that this Notion would bring in a very ordinary Vertue to the World. And as for other things 'tis plain, that as the World now goeth, and that as God seems to regard it here, no Man need trouble himself to be a Worshipper of God; when yet the Payment of our Duty to Almighty God, one would think God should first expect of us, his own Glory being the supreme end of all. For we see commonly there is no difference, except in very rare or reserved Cases. For generally it is *all one to him that Sacrificeth, and to him that Sacrificeth not; and he that sweareth is as he that feareth an Oath*, Eccles. 9, 2. One commonly liveth as long as the other, and enjoyeth as much Pleasure, and hath as good an Estate; and here the Religious Man's Vertue and Devotion therefore hath no manner of distinguishing Reward in it; and if there were no other Dispensation of things ever to be, or as they go here, it would not be worth the while for a Man to trouble himself much about the matter, especially in a time of Affliction or Persecution, when he is scoff'd and scorn'd at for it. And tho' a Man would not be wicked over much, for fear of hurting himself, yet no Man neither need to be very punctual or exact in his Righteousness; but accommodate himself to Times, and Places, and

Conditions, as may be most for his Advantage.

And therefore God's way of Government of Man here, if here were all, could not possibly be freed from very just exceptions: But a great part of his Law, with respect to Man, and all that with respect to himself, would be in vain; and it would appear, that he that is so wise an Agent, would be perfectly negligent at least in his Government, and nothing could be said in his vindication. But what? Is it so indeed? No, We may therefore surely and reasonably conclude, that there is a time a coming, wherein, in the other World, seeing it is not done in this, that all things shall be set strait; and the advantage of the strictest Vertue will appear to be infinitely above that of Vice, and the Justice of all Proceedings shall fully be made manifest, when God shall judge the World in Righteousness.

Q. And is the Lord Jesus Christ to be this Judge at last?

A. Yes. This is to be the last Act of his kingly Power; and when this is done, his mediatory Kingdom will be resign'd into his Father's Hands, and so be no more, because all that it was designed for, is accomplished, 1 Cor. 15. 28. But this Dignity and Power was confer'd upon him, in consideration of his former Sufferings as Man, Phil. 2. 6. And as he is Man, now assisted by the Godhead dwelling in him, which was before quiescent in his suffering State, John 5. 22, 27. He had a Judiciary Power, as God, together with the Father, which was Original

ginal and Supreme, but now he hath *as Man* a Power delegated by Commission; so that 'tis his Judgment-Seat that all must appear before, *Acts 10. 42. He is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead, Acts 17. 31. He is the Man whom he hath ordained.*

And as this was a fit recompence for his Sufferings, so it seemed very congruous and expedient in itself, That Man who is a Creature, consisting of Soul and Body, and not a pure Intellect only, should have a visible Judge to appear before; that all Men might see him, from whom at last they shall receive their Sentence. And that the Equity of the Divine Proceeding might be more apparent and evident to the satisfaction of all, by the sentence of such a Judge; who being Man as well as God, and so of near Affinity to Man, and having experienced himself our several Infirmities and Weaknesses, and known what Humane Nature is by his own feeling, and being one who hath born such an exceeding Love to Mankind, and done and suffered so much for them, might be thought very reasonably to have a great respect to them, and not to pass any hard Judgment, but upon a meer unwilling necessity, which all must acquiesce in. And then moreover He being God as well as Man, and having his Manhood now assisted by his Godhead dwelling therein, he is past all exception qualify'd for this high Act of Judgment; both by his Understanding whereby he is capacitated for the full and perfect Knowledge of all things relating thereunto, being perfectly acquainted with every Man's Case; and also by his Power, whereby as he made

and governs all, so he is able to confer Rewards and Punishments upon all, as he seeth fit. From all which we may certainly conclude, that as the Judgment will be very strict and impartial, so it will be also fair and equal, upon a certain knowledge and just comparing of all things together, managed by an Authority mix'd of Greatness and Goodness.

Q. Who are those that shall be judged by this Judge?

A. All Men: Both those that are alive then, and those that were dead before. For so it is said in most of those Places, wherein this Judgment is expressly discours'd of, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Heb. 9. 27. Acts 17. 30, 31. John 5. 28. Matth. 25. 32. Rev. 20. 12, 13. All Men, one as well as another, being His Creatures, and so standing all alike in the same relation to God their Creator; and therefore are all the Subjects of his Government, and all under the direction of the Law, and obliged to Obedience thereunto. What difference there is, being only from additional Gifts and Trusts committed to some more than others, which do so much the more inhanse the obligation to Obedience. As for great Men, their Talents have been greater, and their Mercies to engage them to Service so much the more; and Magistrates and Men of Office are under the greater obligation by the very Trusts that are put into their Hands. Gentlemen and Men of Honour, it is not their Estates or Dignities can excuse them, or give them any exemption from the Divine Government. All being but little things to Almighty God; howsoever in respect
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of some external Advantages, they look with a big Aspect here in the World. So that this great King will sit as Judge of Princes and Potentates, as well as of those that are mean and little in the World; being no way to be scared by earthly Greatness, byass'd by Flatteries, or brib'd by the costliest Offers or Sacrifices; being infinitely exalted in all perfection, above all those mean things that often times prevent or corrupt earthly Judgments, *Rev. 6. 15, 16. Isa. 11. 2, 3.*

Q. For what shall all be Judged by him?

A. For all their Thoughts, Words and Actions, that are under the direction of God's Law, and are either commanded or forbidden by it, and so are either good or evil, tho' they be never so secret or hidden from the Eyes or notice of all the World. For the inward Thoughts and Lusts of Mens Hearts are under the Government of the Law, as well as outward Acts, *Isa. 55. 7. Jer. 4. 14. Prov. 24. 8.* For the Law is Spiritual, and so our Saviour Interprets it, *Matth. 5. and 6. Rom. 7. 7, 14.* The Law-giver himself being a Spirit, and the Father of Spirits, and the Author of all our Powers, and the Searcher of Hearts; and therefore will require of every one accordingly, *Jer. 17. 10. Rom. 2. 16. 1. Cor. 4. 5.* And therefore it concerns us, as much as may be, to purge our Hearts of these things, *Jam. 4. 8. 2. Cor. 7. 1.* And to see, that we never encourage or consent to them, *Rom. 12. 14. James 1. 15.*

And as for Words, tho' many Men think them but Wind, and that they are gone as soon as they are spoken, yet those come under the Government

ment of the Law too, and so shall be judged, *Matth. 5. 22. Jude 15. Mal. 2. 17. Psal. 36. 3. Prov. 6. 17. Matth. 12. 36, 37.* There may be a great deal of Wickedness in words, and a great deal of Mischief that comes by them, *James 3. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

And if these shall be judged, then we may be sure, that outward Acts will, which render that which is in the Heart, more intense; and commonly have a longer train of Consequences, good or evil, depending upon them; and according to which therefore Men must expect, that their Judgment will proceed, and according to the Fruit that springs from them. And tho' these Actions be never so secret, yet they are under God's Eye, as much as if they were committed in the open Market-place, *Job 34. 21, 22.* So that 'tis in vain for Men to think to conceal any thing from God, who hath such an all-seeing Eye, and Omnipresence, *Psal. 139. 3, 4, 5, &c.* And therefore it concerns all to beware of secret Works of Darknes, *Eccles. 12. 14.* Nay, of these it may be said, in some respect, that they do most affront God's Omniscience, and have most of Hypocrisie in them; and and therefore at last will be laid most open, *1 Cor. 4. 5. Matth. 10. 26. and 23. 13. and 15. 7.*

And yet this Judgment moreover will not be restrained barely to Actions, but will be extended to Omissions of Duty, or of Actions that should have been done. There being the same transgression of a positive Precept, in the omission of a Duty, as there is of a negative, in the commission of any actual sin. And therefore
Omis.

Omissions are no less accountable for, than Commissions; and not living a Life of Holiness in the Performance of our Duty to God or Man, will make Men liable to Condemnation, as well as positive Wickedness and Profaneness will do, *Matth. 25. 24-42, 43.*

Q. What will be the Manner and Circumstances of this Judgment at last?

A. The Manner and Circumstances thereof, are not perfectly revealed to us. There is a *set time* for it, fix'd and appointed by God, in his eternal Decree, *Acts 17. 31.* which is called, the *Day of the Lord*, *1 Thess. 5. 2.* And the *Day of Christ*, *2 Thess. 2. 2.* And comprehends all that time, wherein this glorious Work is transacting; but how long it will be in carrying on, we have not made known to us. Nor when the time of the beginning of it will be, which neither the *Angels in Heaven*, nor Christ himself, as *Man*, when he was upon Earth, were acquainted with, *Matth. 24. 36. Mark 13. 32.* But that it will be upon a sudden, like the coming of a *Thief in the Night*, and in *such an Hour*, as Men think not, *1 Thess. 5. 2, 3. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 16. 15.* Nor is the determinate *Place* made known to us, but only this, that it will be in *the Air*, *1 Thess. 4. 17.* And our Lord saith, that he will come in *the Clouds of Heaven*, *Matth. 26. 64.*

But wherever it will be, and whenever it will be, the *Manner* of it will be exceeding Glorious, with all the most glittering Solemnity, and most magnificent Pomp and Splendor, with all the Royal Attendance of Angels and Seraphims, who shall wait upon our Lord at his Descent. For
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our Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, with the voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God, 1 Theff. 4. 16. The Angels shall march before them with a great sound of a Trumpet, Matth. 24. 31. And then our Lord himself will appear in his glorified State. He will come with Power and great Glory, Matth. 24. 30. He shall come with his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of all the holy Angels, Luke 9. 26. Matth. 16. 27. And then a Throne shall be set, and the Dead raised, and the Angels shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, Matth. 24. 31. And all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, John 5. 28, 29. For there shall be a Resurrection, both of the Just and Unjust, Acts 24. 15. And when He is set upon the Throne of his Glory, before him shall be gathered all Nations, Matth. 25. 32.

And then they shall be tryed, and all their Actions scann'd impartially, with all the Causes, Motives, Circumstances and Effects, or necessary Consequences of them, according to the Edition of that Law, under which they have lived, Rom. 2. 5. without respect of Persons, whether High or Low, Rich or Poor, Princes and Potentates or mean Men, only as their Work shall be, or according to their Works, without any regard to external Considerations, of Wealth, Honour, Poverty, Meanness, &c. but only as these do any way tend to inhanche or lessen the Merit of their Actions, Deut. 10. 17. Acts 10. 34. Ephef. 6. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Tho' there will be consideration had of Mens Natural Weaknesses and Frailties, and unallowed Ignorance, and involuntary Slips and Failures, thro' meer Infirmary or Surprise, when their Hearts have been truly upright
with

with him, *Heb.* 5. 2. and 4. 15, 16. And therefore there will be also the like Consideration had of Mens Temptations on the one hand, and the disadvantages they have lain under for want of Means, or from bodily weakneses, &c. And so of Men's Advantages, Helps, and Encouragements on the other, according to which the nature and value of their good or evil Deeds will be much increased or diminish'd, *Rom.* 2. 12. *Acts* 17. 30. *Matth.* 12. 41. and 11. 21. *Luke* 11. 24. So as that Judgment shall proceed with all equity and reasonableness so as to satisfy all, of the exact Justice, Fairness, and Impartiality thereof, according to full Evidence, and Witness had of the Facts, *Rom.* 2. 15, 16. *Rev.* 20. 12. and a just scanning and security of their Natures. And then, when this Scrutiny and full Examination and Tryal is over, comes the division or separation of the one from the other, all being to be divided into two Companies, on the Right and on the Left, and so to be absolved or condemned at the last Sentence, *Matth.* 25. 31, 32, &c.

Q. What then will be the end and issue of this Tryal and Judgment past?

A. The Examination and Tryal being thus over, and the Division made accordingly, then the Judge will pass his last and definitive Sentence upon both Parties. To those that are on his right Hand, he will say, *Come ye Blessed Children of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World, Matth.* 25. 34. For the Saints of God are first to be acquitted, before the Sentence is to pass upon the Wicked.

Wicked, that they may afterwards joyne with Christ in Judging the rest of the World, 1 Cor. 6, 7. which shall be accordingly executed, and they shall sit with Christ on his Throne, Rev. 3. 21. Matth. 19. 28. And shall be a thousand-fold rewarded for all their Sufferings and labour of Love, which they have shewed to his Name, Matth. 19. 29. Rom. 8. 18. And then the Sentence of Condemnation shall be pass'd on those on the left Hand, in these terrible Words, *Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Matth. 25. 41. and 7. 23.

And after this, then shall this great Solemnity break up, and all good Men shall ascend together with their Lord, with Joy and Triumph, into the Eternal Kingdom, where they shall for ever be with the Lord, in full possession of Happiness for ever, John 17. 24. 1 Thess. 4. 17. And when they are gone, and safely arrived at their Father's House, then comes down the direful execution of the Condemnatory Sentence before past upon the wicked; and by the Fire that shall break forth from his Presence, at his all-commanding Word, *the Heavens*, which here relate to Men, *shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth and all the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. 3. 10. So as all shall become as one Globe of Fire, one boiling or flaming Furnace of wrath; and seems to be designed for ever after to be the eternal Habitation of Devils and wicked Men; where all shall be tormented Day and Night together, for ever and ever, Rev. 20. 10. And there shall be a great Gulf fixed so, as that there shall never be

be any passing from one to the other any more,
Luke 16. 25.

Q. But is there not besides this general Judgment of the last and great Day, a particular Judgment of every Man at Death?

A. Yes, there is: So that every Man at his Death, doth pass to a State of Happiness or Misery; which made St. Paul desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 21. Because he knew, that when he should be absent from the Body, he should be present with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 6--8. As the Penitent Thief was in Paradise with our Saviour the same Day He was Crucified, Luke 23. 43. And so, Lazarus, as soon as he died, was carried into Abraham's Bosom; and the rich Man that died, lift up his Eyes in Hell, being in torment, Luke 16. 22, 23. But neither the Happiness of the one, nor the Misery of the other, will be full and compleat, till that solemn and great Day of Judgment comes, when Soul and Body, at the Resurrection, shall be united together; and in that their Union shall have other and deeper Sensations of Pain and Pleasure, than the Soul could have alone by itself, in its separate State. So that that is the Day, when good Men shall be recompensed fully, and not before, Luke 14. 14. Then they shall have the full Consummation of the Reward, which they are now waiting for, Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11. And so Devils and wicked Men yet are not fully punish'd, but the Devils are reserved in Chains for it, 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Matth. 8. 29. So that the Judgment at Death will be irreversibile; but it will be more solemn and final at last.

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Q. What is the use that we are to make of this Judgment?

A. It is of excellent use to us, for the due governing and ordering of all our ways, both towards God and Man. It should make us circumspect in all our Carriage, and to look carefully to all the parts of our Conversation. And to consider in all our Actions, how they are like to be respected, acquitted or condemned at the great Day, and to act accordingly. And therefore to study the Rule well, that we are now to act by, and to have it, as much as may be, continually in our Eye, and to conform our selves thereunto. Because the same that is the Rule of our Actions now, will be the Rule of the Divine Judgment at the last. And not to govern ourselves by the Judgments of Men; nor too much to value their Censures, nor to suffer ourselves by any Temptations, Persuasions or Threatnings whatsoever, to be carried away from doing our Duty, or to the commission of any known Sin, *Psal. 16. 8. Luke 16. 15. Prov. 5. 21. Heb. 10. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 4. 3. Gal. 6. 4, 5.*

After all our Actions therefore we should examine what we have done; and if we have committed any Sin, labour presently for a Reconciliation with God by a sound Repentance, and renewing our Covenant with him thro' Christ; so that we may labour to keep Consciences void of offence, both towards God and Man. But if we are censured by Men, when we know that we have done right, we may bear it patiently; because there will be a review of Judgment and Actions at the last; and whatever they do, *the*

Lord

Lord shall Judge the World in Righteousness; he shall minister Judgment to the People in Uprightness, Psal. 9. 8. Isa. 11. 2, 3. And then unjust Censures shall be revers'd, and unrighteous Acts rescinded; and foul Aspersions and Criminations shall be taken off from the Backs of the Innocent; because God shall Judge all at the last; which is a great Comfort under all the Unjust Judgments of Men here, Eccles. 3. 16, 17. Psalm 37. 6. James 5. 8, 9. But it doth not belong to us therefore to Judge our Brethren, but leave that matter to Christ, who is to be Judge of all, and can only do it well, 1 Corinth. 4. 5. Rom. 14. 4-10. James 4. 12. Rom. 2. 1, 2, 3.

But for Magistrates and those that are appointed to be Judges over others here, it is a particular Remembrance to them, to see that they execute true Judgment and Justice, which may hold good at the Review of the last Day; so that they themselves may not suffer loss thereby, when they themselves, that are as Gods, or Judges among Men, shall be Judged of the Lord of all; when the Integrity and Justice of all that are Wise and Faithful, shall be Crown'd and Reward-ed; and all Partiality, Bribery, and Unequal Government and Judgment, shall be an everlasting Shame and eternal Confusion to them. For God judgeth among the Gods, Psalm 82. 1, 2. And he will have Righteous Judgment done, 2 Sam. 23. 3. Deut. 1. 13, 14.

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And after all, considering the uncertainty of the Time, both of the Particular and General Judgment, and how sudden and unexpected it may be, it concerns all to wait for the coming of the Lord, and that we prepare, that we may, by our Repentance and good Lives, be ready to appear before him then with Comfort, *Matth. 24. 42, 43. Mark 13. 33, 34.*

SECT,

S E C T. VII.

*Of God the Holy Ghost, and the remaining
Articles of the Creed.*

Q. **W**HAT doth the Third Branch of the Creed
concern?

A. It concerns God the Holy Ghost, whom
we are directed here to profess our Faith in, as
we have done before in God the Father, and in
Jesus Christ his only Son. **I Believe in the
Holy Ghost.**

Q. *Who is the Holy Ghost?*

A. He is a Divine Person, the Third in the
Sacred Trinity, of the same Nature or Essence
with the Father and the Son, but a distinct Per-
son from both.

Q. *How doth it appear, that the Holy Ghost is
a Person?*

A. Because our Lord himself speaks of him as
such a one, that was to be sent by him to sup-
ply his Absence, and describes him by such
Characters and Acts, as express a Person, and
are peculiar to one that is so, John 14. 16. *I
will pray the Father, and He shall give you ano-
ther Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the*

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World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you. And Ver. 26. The Comforter, whom the Father will send in my Name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your Remembrance. And John 16. 7. He will reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. And Ver. 13. He will guide you into all truth; and whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. And He shall glorifie me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. In which Places we have divers personal Acts ascribed to him; as Dwelling, being sent, Teaching, Reproving, Guiding, Hearing, Speaking, shewing things to come, &c. And the Apostle St. Paul speaking of the Diversities of Gifts and Administrations in the Church, 1 Cor. 12. 11. All these, saith he, worketh the self-same Spirit, dividing to every Man severally as he will, where we have Will, Working, Dividing of the Gifts attributed to him. And thus we also find, Acts 13. 2. The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I have called them. And thus we find him joyn'd with those that are Persons, in the same form of speaking, and yet as distinct from them. As in the form of Baptism, Matth. 28. 19. Go, teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And so in St. Paul's Blessing or Prayer for the Corinthians, 2 Cor. 13. 14. The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. And so He is reckon'd by St. John, in his Catalogue of Witnesses, 1 John 5. 7. The Father, the Word, and the

Holy Ghost. How incongruous would it be to joyn him in such solemn A&ts, with those who are confessedly Persons, and as distinct from both, if he himself were not a Person, but only the Vertue or Power of the other? He proceedeth from the Father indeed, and yet is distinguish'd from him. And sometimes he is said to be sent by the Father, and sometimes by the Son, and therefore is not the Father or the Son. Thus, John 15. 26. *The Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father.* And John 14. 26. *The Comforter, whom the Father will send in my Name.* He is reckon'd as a Person together with the Father and the Son, and yet sent by both, and so as distinct from both. And Ephes. 3. 14. *Thro' him, that is Christ, we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

Q. But how doth it appear, that the Holy Ghost is a Divine Person, or that He is God too?

A. Because he is joyn'd in equality of Predication with those who are Divine Persons. Thus we see He is joyn'd with the Father and the Son, by the Apostles, in those Places mention'd before, 2 Cor. 13, 14. 1 John 5. 7. where it is said also, that *these Three are one.* But more than that, he is joyn'd also by our Saviour in that Commission for Baptism, Matth. 28. 19. where *Baptizing in his Name*, is equally commanded, with respect to him, as the other two; and whatever is intended thereby, the same must be meant equally, with respect to him, as to them. And Baptizing in their Name plainly signifying, our being engaged thereby to their Faith, Wor-

ship and Service, as the Masters of our Religion, and the Authors of our Salvation; to whom by this act of Consecration we are solemnly dedicated, and that in a perfect equality, it is thence reasonably to be inferr'd, that the Son and Holy Ghost are Divine Persons also together with the Father, or else we should be dedicated to Creatures in the same form of Words, and in the same most solemn act of Religion, as we are to God the Father himself. The Absurdity of which is enough, in itself, to determine this Matter. And we find a Religious Invocation elsewhere also directed to him by the Apostles, *1 Thess.* 3. 11, 12, 13. *2 Thess.* 3. 3, 4, 5. And thus he hath the Name of God also attributed to him, *Acts* 5. 3, 4. *1 Cor.* 3. 16. And so also the Properties or Attributes of God, as knowing all things, *Heb.* 9. 14. Presence in all Places, *Psalms* 139. 7, &c. And thus there are Three Divine Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Q. But are there not Three Gods then, if all these Three be God?

A. No: Tho' the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, yet there are not three Gods, but one God, as the Scripture every where declares to us. The reason of which can be only this, that they all three partaking of the same Divine Nature, originant in the Father, and communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Holy Ghost, are not three separate Deities, but in intimate and perfect Union one with another, and so are but one God. To conceive the Mode of which, however puzzling it may be to us; yet seeing the Scripture, which
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we own for the Rule of our Faith, declares the thing to us, according to the proof that is made thereof, we are bound to embrace the Thing or Doctrine in itself, tho' the Manner how this should be, may be for ever an inscrutable Mystery to us. And this is no more than what we are forc'd to allow in other things, there being abundance of Appearances even in Nature itself, obvious before us, that we are fully assured of the truth of, and yet as to the Manner or Way how it is so, is beyond the reach of our Understanding to fathom. And considering the Infiniteness of the Divine Nature, and the Incomprehensibleness thereof to us Following therefrom, it is no Wonder that it should be so here in this Matter. Nor can it be said with just reason, that there is any Contradiction between Three and One, when they are so understood and declared to be not in one, but in different respects, as they are here.

Q. But why is the Title Holy particularly ascribed here to the Holy Ghost?

A. Not so much in respect of his essential Holiness; for so that is an Attribute which belongs to all three Persons; who being all three God, and equal in Nature and Essence, are so also in Holiness. But this is spoken here, rather in respect of his Office and Operations, which is to *Sanctify*; or *make Holy*; He being the Worker of Sanctification and Holiness in us; and accordingly we are to believe in him, and depend upon him, for that Grace and Power, by which this may be done; He being the Author, next to Christ himself, of all the means that contri-

bute thereunto ; therefore to him, next to Christ, and as his Vicegerent upon Earth, in his absence from us, we are to ascribe the Honour of all. He being to be Christ's Agent to all and do all things in his stead, Our Saviour, when he was about to leave the World, having given to his Disciples the promise of the Holy Spirit, that he should act the part of an Advocate for him, He accordingly sent him forth after his Ascension, according to our Saviour's Promise, *John* 14. 26. and 16. 13. *Act.* 1. 5. which we find fulfil'd, *Acts* 2. 1, &c.

And by this means the Holy Apostles become able Ministers of the New Testament in our Saviour's absence, to reveal to Men the whole Counsel of God in any thing that remain'd farther to be done. And to this blessed Gift and Operation of the Holy Spirit, inspiring the Apostles, we are indebted for that full revelation of Divine Doctrine, which is now left us upon Record in the Holy Scriptures. *The same having been revealed to the Apostles, and Prophets by the Spirit*, *Eph.* 3. 5. For they spoke, as also the Holy Men of Old did, *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, *2 Pet.* 1. ult. And thus *all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God*, *2 Tim.* 3. 16. And what they spake, was not meerly the Word of Man, but was in Truth the Word of God, *1 Thes.* 2. 13. By the Revelation of the Spirit, who searcheth the deep things of God, *1 Cor.* 2. 9. which is a Gift of inestimable value, and is the great Instrument of the Renovation and Sanctification of Men; being the incorruptible Seed, by which they are born again, *1 Pet.* 1. 23. which effectually worketh in them that believe, and is the power

power of God to Salvation, 1 Thef. 2. 13. Rom. 1. 16.

And that this might have the greater power upon Men, to perswade and engage them thereunto, they had also the gift of Miracles from the same Spirit, to convince the World of their mission from God, and of the Truth of the Doctrine delivered by them. *God bearing the Apostles witness, with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, Heb. 2. 4.* So that their Speech was in the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, *1 Cor. 2. 4. The Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with Signs following, Mark 16. 20.* Such as the Gift of healing all manner of Diseases, *1 Cor. 12. 9. Acts 3. 2, 6. and 5. 15. and 9. 33. and 14. 8. and 19. 12. Mark 6. 13. James 5. 14, 15. Casting out Devils, Acts 5. 16. and 16. 18. and 19. 12. Raising the Dead, Acts 9. 39, 40. and 20. 9, 10. Of inflicting Bodily Diseases on contumacious Sinners, Acts 13. 8, 9, 11. 1 Cor. 5. 5. A miraculous Gift of utterance and fluency of Speech, accompanied with a wonderful boldness, whereby they confounded their Adversaries, Acts 4. 6, 7, 8, 10. Matth. 10. 18, 19, 20. Acts 18. 5, 6. 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. Tho' this was not always given them, 1 Cor. 2. 3. Acts 18. 9. Col. 4. 3, 4. Ephes. 6. 19, 20. The Gift of speaking strange Tongues, and of Interpreting Tongues, Acts 2. 1, &c. and 10. 44, 45. and 19. 2, 6. 1 Cor. 14. 2--5--13. All which Powers were the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and were the last means that God thought fit to use; for the Conviction of Men, to bring them to the Faith of Christ, and Obedience to the Gospel; and if these did not prevail, they were like to be left re-*

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medilefs, under the Power of their Infidelity and Sin. And the flandering and blaspheming of thefe extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which was the moft that could be done for the conviction and begetting Faith in Men, as if they were the Works of the Devil, is that unpardonable Sin againft the Holy Ghost, that our Saviour faith, never fhould be forgiven, *Matth.* 12. 24-32. *Mark* 3. 30.

Many other Gifts and Offices alfo are given and beftowed by the Holy Ghost, fome proper to that Age of the Church, and fome to laft for ever, for the *Work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of the Body of Chrift*, mentioned, *Ephes.* 4. 8-11, 12. *1 Cor.* 12. 28. Thefe are alfo the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, from whom they do all derive their Authority and Power, *Acts* 20. 28. *John* 20. 21, 22, 23. *Acts* 13. 2.

But befides all thefe, there are alfo the more inward and immediate Operations of the Holy Ghost upon the Spirits of Men, to incline them to that which is good, to work Grace and Sanctification in them, by means of the Word; which the meer outward Adminiftration alone, would not be fufficient for. So that God is faid to work *in us*, *Phil.* 2. 13. *Heb.* 13. 21. which implieth fome inward Energy or Operation of the Holy Spirit in Men; who is therefore faid alfo to dwell *in Men*, as his *Temples*, *1 Cor.* 3. 16. And therefore alfo the Beginning Progreff and Perfection of Sanctification in Men, and all that Grace, Strength and Comfort that they have, is always afcribed to him. *Mortification of Sin*, *Rom.* 8. 2. 13. *Gal.* 5. 17. The beginning and Progreff of *Sanctification*, *2 Theff.* 2. 13. *1 Pet.* 1. 2.

1. 2. Acts 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. All the several Graces and *Vertues* of the Christian Life are Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Rom. 5. 5. Gal. 5. 5. It is by him therefore that we have union with Christ our Head, 1 Cor. 6. 17. and 12, 13. One Spirit actuates this Body, Ephes. 4. 2. From whom we have all our *Supplies*, Strength, Comfort and Peace, Phil. 1. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 21. Rom. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Ephes. 3. 16. He teacheth us to pray, and helps our Infirmities, Rom. 8. 15, 26. And supports us under all our Weaknesses, Tryals and Wants, 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11, 12, 13. 1 Thess. 1. 6. Acts 13. 12. And gives Assurance of his Favour, 2 Cor. 1. 22. Ephes. 1. 14.

Q. What is the use that we should make of all this Doctrine of the Holy Ghost?

A. We must give the praise of the Revelation of all that Divine Doctrine, that is made known to us by the Apostles in the Holy Scriptures, to the Holy Ghost, as Christ's Substitute, inspiring them with Wisdom for it, and confirming the same by Miracles, to engage us to receive the same. And therefore we are obliged thereby to entertain the same, as the Word of Christ, and to govern our Faith and Practice thereby. And so also to submit ourselves to the teaching and direction of those Officers and Ministers, that the Holy Ghost hath ordained and establish'd in the Church, whilst they speak and deliver to us the Word of Christ, which are to continue to the end of the World, Matth 28. 19, 20. 2 Tim. 1. 14. and 2. 2. Ephes. 4. 12, 13. And we may hence justly infer, that they who cast off Church Officers

Officers and Ordinances, upon pretence of being under the conduct of the Spirit, are not acted by the true Spirit of God, because they go to pluck down what he hath planted.

But as we are to give the praise of all these things to the Holy Ghost, so also of all the good we have, and of all that Grace and Vertue that we are in any measure endued with; being well assured, that we cannot have this from ourselves, or by the meer use of our Natural Powers alone, without his assistance and influence, *John* 3. 6. *Rom.* 8. 5. and 7. 18, 23. And therefore we must also always have recourse to him, and depend upon him for his Conduct and Influence, for our inlightning, purging and cleansing, to enable us to believe and obey his sacred Doctrine, to sanctifie us throughout, and to help us in all we do; all that Spiritual Life we have, being derived to us from him, *Ephes.* 1. 17. and 3. 16, 17.

But we are not now to expect any new Inspirations, or new Revelations from the Holy Ghost, for the making known of any new Doctrine to us, that was not discover'd before; nor are we to listen to any of those new Lights, that do pretend hereunto. All things being fully revealed, that are necessary for our Faith and Comfort, and the Terms of Salvation being all settled already, and no other Light or Gospel, being ever more to be preach'd, but what we have already receiv'd, *Gal.* 1. 8. *1 Cor.* 15. *1 John* 20. 31. *1 John* 1. 3, 4. *2 Tim.* 3. 15, 16.

And much more, if any bring any Doctrine contrary to this, we are bound not to receive it, whatever pretence to the Spirit they may make.

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For we are sure that the Holy Spirit cannot contradict himself; and that Doctrine that we hold already, we are well assured, is from the Spirit, and therefore must try all Doctrines by it, 1 *Joh.*

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Nor are we bound to receive any new Doctrine nor any new Message from God without Miracles, which are to be Mens Credentials, to prove that they come from God: And therefore *Moses* was empower'd to work such Signs, to oblige the People to believe him, that he came to them with a Message from God, *Exod.* 4. 1-5, 6, 7, &c. And our *Saviour* himself did the same, *John* 5. 31, 32-36, and 15. 24. And if any pretend to the Miraculous Operations of the Holy Ghost, for the confirming of what they say, if it be for the confirmation of Doctrine, that is contrary to what hath been delivered to us already and confirmed by Miracles, we are to reject all such Pretensions, whatever they may seem, *Deut.* 13.

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And then lastly, As for those Operations of the Holy Ghost, which are for the Working and increase of Grace and Sanctification in Men, tho' we are to depend upon the assistance of the Holy Ghost to that end, yet that must not be to exclude our Endeavours, in the use of the means appointed by the Holy Ghost. For we are to consider, that the Operations of the Holy Spirit in us, of that kind, are only to be expected by way of Assistance to our natural Faculties, and not to excuse us from Labour and Diligence therein. And therefore we are also exhorted to this, at the same time that we are to expect the Holy Spirit's help, *Phil.* 2. 12. *Ezek.* 38. 26.

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compared with, *Ezek.* 18. 31. *2 Pet.* 1. 5-10. *Luke* 13. 24. For these Assistances we must expect only in a way suitable to our rational Natures; whilst we are considering and meditating upon the things of God; which therefore we are often put upon, *Psal.* 50 22. *Hag.* 1. 5-7. *Isa.* 1. 3. and 44. 19. For it being the Word of God, that is the great Instrument of our Sanctification, these Assistances and Operations of the Holy Spirit, are to be expected only in conjunction with our use of that; so that we must not separate the one from the other, or depend upon one without the other, *James* 1. 18, 19. *Psal.* 1. 2, 3. and 19. 7. *1 Cor.* 4. 15. *Acts* 20. 32. *2 Pet.* 1. 4. *John* 17. 17.

But that we may partake of the Holy Spirit's continual assistance, we must see that we attend to his Godly Motions, and that we do not resist him inwardly exciting us to our Duty, or checking us, whilst we are going on in an evil way, *Acts* 7. 51. *Isa.* 63. 10. *Heb.* 10. 29. And that we may have him constantly dwelling and residing in us, to guide and govern us in all our ways, we must see that we do not grieve or provoke him to leave us, and that we do not drive him away from us; by Sensuality and Uncleaness, than which there is nothing that doth more invalidate the Motions of the Holy Spirit, or deadens the Spirit of Man to all Divine things, *Ephes.* 5. 18. and 4. 29, 30. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, &c. *2 Pet.* 2. 10. *Luke* 4. 33. By Rancour, and Bitterness and Implacableness, which is a Disposition of Mind quite contrary to the kind and gentle Temper of the Holy Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. *1 Joh.* 4. 7. *James* 2. 15. *2 Tim.* 1. 7. By the excessive
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and inordinate minding of earthly things and carking Cares, *Matth. 13. 22.*

Q. *What doth the Fourth part of the Creed concern?*

A. It concerns the *Church* of Christ, its Duties and Priviledges. For it is the Church only, that perceiveth the Effect, Benefit and Comfort of all that hath been done by God the Father, and our Redeemer Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, for the Salvation of Men. And therefore this Article followeth next, **I Believe the Holy Catholick Church.** For Christ is said to be the Saviour only of *his Body*, *Ephes. 5. 23.* And 'tis the *Church*, *that is his Body*, of which he is the Head, *Ephes. 1. 22; 23.* And therefore it is said, that God *added to the Church such as should be saved*, *Acts 2. 47.* From whence it appears, that all should become Members thereof, and still continue in the Communion of it, that expect Salvation by Jesus Christ.

Q. *What is that which you call the Church?*

A. It is the Society of all those Persons that are called to the Faith of Christ, and to the profession of his true Religion. This is that which is called the *Visible Church* of Christ. But those only, that do heartily and sincerely obey this Call, and do unfeignedly believe in Christ, and yield themselves up to him as his Servants and Followers; and that not only make a Profession of the Christian Religion, but do also lead truly Christian Lives, according to the Christian Faith and Rules that they profess, shall have any saving Benefit by Christ Jesus, *Matth. 7.*

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21, 22. *Phil.* 3. 17, 18, 19. *Luke* 6. 46, 47, 48, 49.

Q. What is it that you profess to believe concerning this Church?

A. That God hath always had from the first publishing of the Gospel, hath now, and ever will have, to the end of the World, some such as profess Faith in Christ, and a subjection of themselves to him, as their Head and Governour, and that expect Salvation by his Means and Mediation, in opposition to all other false Religions: And that some there are, that do sincerely believe in him, notwithstanding all the Power and Malice of Men or Devils to prevent it. And that to this Church, all that expect to be saved, ought to associate themselves. All which together make the *one* Church of Christ, part of which is now triumphant in Heaven, and part of it Militant upon Earth. And all, at last, that are sincere and true Christians, shall be gathered together into one Place and Kingdom, *Matth.* 16. 18. *Heb.* 12. 23.

Q. How is the Church said to be Holy?

A. As it is separated and set apart from the rest of the World, and dedicated to God by an Holy Covenant, and thereby is under the greatest obligation to Holiness; and all that are adult in it, are bound to make a profession of Holiness; and it is partly sanctified by the Grace of the Holy Spirit in this Life; and they that are truly Holy, shall be made perfectly so in the Life to come, *1 Pet.* 2. 9. *Ye are a chosen Generation; an holy Nation, a peculiar People,* *1 Cor.* 1. 2. *The Church*

Church of Corinth called to be Saints. 1 Theff. 4. 7. For God hath not called us to Uncleaness, but to Holiness. And therefore all that call themselves Christians, and are Members of Christ's Church, ought to study for and walk in Holiness, this being the very end of their Calling, and of all that was ever done for them, 2 Tim. 1. 9. He hath called us with an holy Calling, Ephes. 1. 4. He hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the World, that we should be holy, Ephes. 5. 26. He gave himself for the Church that he might sanctifie it, 1 Pet. 1. 15. As he which hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy, Ephes. 4. 5. Walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called, 1 Cor. 3. 17. For the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Rom. 12. 2. Be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from Iniquity. Heb. 12. 14. Follow Peace and Holiness, neither is it enough to be a Jew or a Christian outwardly, but he must be inwardly so, Rom. 2. 28, 29. But we must be wholly sanctified, 1 Theff. 5. 23. That we may be presented holy and unblamable, and unreprouable in his sight, Col. 1. 22.

And to this end the Ministry and Sacraments are given, and Discipline must be used in the Church, to preserve it holy, at least from all gross and visible Pollutions, and Scandals. And though there will be a mixture of good and bad in the Church, some upright Christians, and some Hypocrites, and Profane; Mat. 13.

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24, 47. Yet ye must not discourage all laudable and warrantable attempts of Reformation; but we must do what may be done, and labour as much as may be, to oppose the ungodliness of Profane Christians, for the Honour of our Lord, and the reputation of our Holy Religion. For all those that call themselves Christians, and love Wickedness, in contradiction to the Holy Rules of our Profession, however they may glory in the Name of the Church, they are but meer Pretenders, and not true Members of it, but are the very Scars and Wens in its Face. Nor will all their Profession stand them in any stead to skreen off the Divine Vengeance from them, but will aggravate their Damnation, *Jer.* 7. 4, &c. *Amos* 3. 2. *Jer.* 13. 15, 17. *Matth.* 7. 21, 22. *1 Cor.* 4. 19, 20, 21.

Q. Why is the Church here called the Catholick Church?

A. Catholick signifieth Universal. And the Christian Church is therefore called the Catholick Church, to signifie its Universality, and to shew that it is not confined to one Nation or Place; and so to distinguish it from the Jewish Church, which was confined to that Nation only; whereas the Christian Church is extended to all Nations, *Matth.* 28. 19. *Acts* 10. 34, 35. *1 Cor.* 12. 13. *Gal.* 3. 28. *Ephes.* 2. 14, 15. and 3. 5, 6. *Revel.* 7. 9. It is this universal Church of Christ, that is meant here, when we profess our belief thereof; that which we profess to believe here, being of that Church, which is always to continue, and endureth through all Ages; which can only be affirmed of

of the Universal Church, there being no particular Church in any particular Place, but what may fail.

But there is *another sense* also, wherein the Church is called *Catholick*, as the whole Church in all Places holds the same *Common Faith*, or Doctrine in all the necessary and fundamental Points. For there is *one Faith*, Ephes, 4. 5. And this common Faith all must hold, without which the Church is not a Church. And in respect of this Catholick Faith, any *particular Church*, whether it be National, Provincial or Congregational, may be called a Catholick Church; as it holds the same Faith, or Orthodox Doctrine, which is held by the Church in all Places and Times, without any Heretical Pravity, and so is a sound part of it. But no particular Church can be called the Catholick Church, as *Catholick* signifieth the Universal Church itself, no more than a part can be called the whole.

Q. What is the use, that we are to make thereof?

A. It is matter of great Thankfulness from us to Almighty God, that whereas formerly he was pleased more especially to confine his Respects to the Seed of *Abraham*, and chose the People of *Israel*, above all others, to be his peculiar People, to whom did pertain the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises, and to them were committed the Oracles of God, Rom. 9. 4. and 3. 2. That now he is pleased to extend his Mercy so far and wide, that we who were Sinners of the Gentiles, and were Aliens from God,

and from the Covenants of Promise, are now brought nigh by the Blood of Christ; that the Gentiles are now become fellow Heirs of the same Body, and partakers of his Promise in Christ, by the Gospel, Ephes. 2. 12. and 3. 6. For this Cause we Gentiles therefore ought to glorifie God for his Mercy, and sing unto his Name, Rom. 15. 9, 10, 11. And give thanks unto the Father, who hath delivered us from the power of Darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, Col. 1. 12, 13. This we of this Nation have particular cause to do, for his great and eminent Mercy to us.

And as we are now become a part of this Catholick Church, as it is so denominated from the Catholick Faith, that it professeth, we ought to contend earnestly for that Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints, Jude 3. And see that we keep it pure and intire, that Faith and Doctrine, which concerns the Universal Church, and which relates to our common Salvation; the Summary of which is contain'd in the Creed, in the severall Branches of it. This Faith we must hold, 1 Tim. 1. 19. And continue in it, grounded and settled, Col. 1. 23. And that without wavering, Heb. 10. 23. And not be tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, Ephes. 4. 14. That we may not be led away with the error of the wicked, 2 Pet. 3. 17. And therefore we must be always sure to maintain these Articles inviolably, which are the very foundation and ground-work of all our Religion, and upon which the Church is built. A Faith in the one true God, and in his Providence and Care, to reward those that serve him, Heb. 11. 6. Next to which, is Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, John 17. 3. and
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i. *John* 2. 22. Faith in Christ, as the Son of God, his Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection and Glorification, and in his Merits and Mediation for the procuring of Pardon of Sin, and eternal Life for us, being that which doth denominate the Church to be truly Catholick and Christian, we must be sure to keep to our Head Christ Jesus, who is the foundation of all, *1 Cor.* 3. 11. *Matth.* 16. 16-18. *1 John* 4. 2, 3, 15. *1 John* 5. 1. *1 Cor.* 2. 2. *Rom.* 10. 9. *Acts* 10. 42. *1 John* 5. 10, 11, 12. And the Belief of the Holy Ghost is no less joynd by our Saviour himself, in the Form of Baptism, wherein the Christian Covenant is contain'd; and therefore is no less necessary to make a Man a true Christian, *Matth.* 28. 19.

Though all Truth is highly valuable, as far as we can arrive to the knowledge thereof, yet these are the things that we must live upon; these are the Catholick and ground-work Points, the very Foundation of all. And we must take heed, that we don't *build Wood, Hay, or Stubble thereupon*, *1 Cor.* 3. 12. Nor must we contend, or express our Zeal or Concern for any other Points so much as for these. This being the *Doctrine, which is according to Godliness*, and necessary to found a good Christian Life upon, *1 Tim.* 6. 3, 4, 5. *1 Tim.* 1. 4. *2 Tim.* 2. 14, 15, 16. As for other Points, which are not so necessary to this great end, as these especially are, which for the most part concern the *Modes* of things, it being impossible almost in this Imperfect State, but that Men will have different Sentiments and Apprehensions about them; and therefore it being likely that the Catholick

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Church, as it never did, so it will never agree in them, they ought not to be prest with the same Vehemence and Zeal as the others do deserve, nor be made the necessary Terms of Communion; but in these things there should be a forbearance of one another in Love.

Q. Now what are those Priviledges you speak of, which belong to the Holy Catholick Church?

A. Here are four, which are principally taken notice of, viz.

First, The Communion of Saints.

Secondly, The Forgiveness of Sins.

Thirdly, The Resurrection of the Body.

Fourthly, The Life everlasting.

With which are connected, or from which do flow also some others; as Provision of all necessary good things here, Support under Afflictions, Protection in Dangers, as far as is meet, Spiritual Joy and Rejoycing, &c.

Q. What is the Communion of Saints, which is the first Priviledge here mention'd?

A. By Saints, as signifying Holy Persons, are to be understood in general, all those who are visible Members of Christ's Church, being all called to be Saints, and are redeemed for this purpose, and separated from the rest of the World, and devoted in their Baptism to God's Holy Service, which it is their Duty and Profession to give themselves to, Rom. 1. 7. Ephes. 1. 1. Phil. 1. 1. Colos. 1. 4. Rom. 15. 25, 26-31. 1 Thes. 4. 7. Luke 1. 75. 1 Cor. 14. 33. Jude 3. But this Appellation is most properly to be understood of those that have a lively and active Faith,

Faith, are truly converted from Sin to God, and have a Conversation as it becomes the Gospel, according to the Doctrine which is after Godliness, and thereby shew themselves to be living Members of Christ's Body, *Ephes. 5. 3.*

And these have a Communion with, and Interest in God the Father, as their God, and in his Love, Care and Blessing, *Heb. 8. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18.* And with our Lord Jesus Christ; And all the blessed Benefits purchased by his Death and Sufferings, and that either are already, or will be conferr'd by his Royal Power; *Who is made to them Wisdom and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30.* Thus they have a fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth them from all Sin, *1 John 1. 3--7.* And so also with the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, in the participation of his Influences, Graces and Comforts, and all that Strength and Support which they derive from him, *2 Cor. 13, 14.* And they have the Angels themselves for Ministering Spirits to them, who are always ready to assist and help them, at the Command of their and our common Lord, *Heb. 1. 14. Luke 15. 10. and 16. 22.* And they are Heirs together of the same Promises and Inheritance, *Rom. 8. 14, 17.* And all that are visible Members of this Catholick Church, as they are admitted into this Church by one common Baptism, *Ephes. 4. 5.* So they have a Right of Communicating in all the Ordinances that belong to it, for its nourishment and increase in all that is good; they have a Right to all Christian Priviledges in all the Churches of Christ, as being free of the whole Christian Society, till by

their falling into Sins and Scandals again, they cease to be visible Saints any longer, and by a just Excommunication are cut off from this Body, *Acts 2. 42. 1 Cor. 10. 17.*

Q. What is the Duty arising from this Communion?

A. We are hereby engaged on our part, to live every way suitably to the Nature of such a Privilege. As we have God the Father so freely and graciously offering and communicating himself to us, so we should live upon, and to God as our All in All. And our Faith, Hope and Love should be still carried forth to him, as an infinite Ocean of all Goodness, Perfection and Excellency, *Psal. 73. 25, 26, 27, 28.* And in comparison of him, all things else should be look'd upon but as Vanity, Dust and Dung, *Psal. 4. 6, 7, 8. and 16. 5, 6.* We should live daily by Faith on Christ Jesus, as the only Mediator between God and Man, as our great High Priest, Teacher, Head and Sovereign; and so should depend upon him, and submit ourselves to him, by Acts of Faith, Love, Thankfulness, Devotion, and Resignation to his Service, *Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. Phil. 1. 21. Rev. 1. 5, 6.* We should depend upon, and live and work by the Holy Spirit, and by his Strength and Conduct, as the Body doth by the Soul, *2 Tim. 1. 14. John 14. 15, 16, 17.* We should rejoice in the Ministry of Angels, and in our mutual Benefits, Privileges and Blessings, *Psal. 91. 11.*

And all that are the Members of Christ's visible Body the Church, should maintain a Christian Fellowship one with another in the same Faith

or

or Belief of the Christian Doctrine, which is common to all the Church of Christ; and in the same Worship and Devotion, in the use of the same Ordinances, Prayers and Sacraments for the Matter and Substance of them, doing all in the Name of Christ, and expecting acceptance thereof only upon his Account; however different they may be in respect of Forms and Circumstances which attend the Administration, and are left undetermined to us, under the direction of general Rules only. That by all these things we may shew and approve ourselves to be of the same Body, that one Body of Christ's Catholick Church, to which all those things belong, *Acts* 2. 42. *I Cor.* 12. 12, 13. *I Cor.* 10. 17.

And because the whole Catholick Church cannot come or meet together in one place for the performing of these Acts, therefore there is a necessity that there be a Division or Partition made thereof into particular Worshipping Assemblies, for the solemn celebration of Divine Worship and Service, to the Glory of God and their Redeemer, and their own mutual edification, which are therefore call'd particular Churches, constituted and appointed for that end, with Pastors and Officers set over them, to conduct and feed the Flock of God committed to them, *Heb.* 10. 25.

And when they are entred into this Fellowship or Communion, the best Rule for which ordinarily is Christian Neighbourhood or Vicinity of Habitation, or the Districts or Precincts appointed by the Christian Magistrate for Civil Meetings and Services; they are then to take great care to avoid all causeless Divisions and Breaches

Breaches of this Communion, and of making any Factions, Schisms or Separations therefrom; which disunite the Body of Christ, and hinder the growth of the several parts, and therefore are very much condemned in Scripture, and the contrary prest upon all Christians with great Vehemency, that they love one another, and that they take all possible care to preserve Union and Peace among themselves, for their Mutual Benefit, and procuring a Reputation to their Religion and Profession among others that are Strangers thereunto, 1 Cor. 3. 3. 4. James 3. 14, 15, 16. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Phil. 2. 1, 2. Ephes. 4. 3, 16. Rom. 16. 17. 1 Peter 3. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. And therefore when any Persons make any Divisions in, or Separations from any Church, they must be sure, they have very good Cause and Reason for it, that will bear them out therein; or else through a Violation of Love and Peace thereby, they bring great Guilt upon themselves, and instead of benefiting the Christian Cause, they do the greatest Prejudice thereto. It is not the Wicked Lives or Heretical Tenets of any of the Members, or Defect of Discipline, is a sufficient Reason for it; where there is no substantial Defect in the Administration of the Ordinances, nor any sinful Form of Communion required to be assented to, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2. and 15. 12. Galat. 1. 7. Revel. 2. 14, 15, 20.

Q. Is it necessary that there should be Churches, or Worshipping Assemblies, for Publick Worship? And is it necessary, that all Christians should resort to some or other of such Assemblies, to Worship God in Society?

A. It

A. It is highly necessary, where there is no just or reasonable Let or Impediment thereunto. It is necessary to the making of a Publick Profession of the Christian and Catholick Faith, which we are bound to; and to shew our Adherence to the True Religion and Church of Christ, which is no way otherwise done so well, as it is this way; and to give a good Example and Encouragement to others thereby. And it is what hath been the Practice of all Nations, even of the Heathens themselves, in the Worship of their Gods; and hath laid a Foundation for their Feasts and Temples and Publick Sacrifices, to make Publick Profession of their Worship, which the very Light of Nature dictated to them, as a very reasonable thing.

For this purpose it was, that besides the Temple, there were so many Synagogues Erected among the *Jews*, where *Moses* was read, and expounded every Sabbath Day, which we find our Saviour himself commonly frequented, and resorted to. And it hath been the Delight of Pious Souls to walk to the House of God in Company, Psalm 55. 14. And to praise God in the Assembly of the Upright, Psal. 3. 1. And it hath been their great Trouble, when by any means they have been hindred and kept from it; which therefore they have longed exceedingly after, Psalm 42. 1, &c. and 84. 1, 2, &c. And Social and Joint Worship we find, hath a very Eminent Promise made to it, that Christ would grant his peculiar Presence therewith, *Matthew* 18. 20. And the Divine Approbation hath been manifested accordingly. The Effusion of the Holy Ghost was, when they were all with one accord in one place, Acts 2. 1, &c. And so, Acts 4. 24, when

when St. Peter was in Prison, *many were gathered praying*, and he was delivered to them, *Acts 12. 12.*

This hath been the manner of Christians from the beginning, to meet in Companies for Divine Worship, for Prayer, and hearing the Word Preach'd, and Participation of the Lord's Supper, *Acts 2. 46. they continued with one accord in the Temple.* Thus at Corinth the whole Church used to come together at one place, *1 Cor. 14. 23.* St. Paul and Barnabas assembled themselves with the Church, a whole Year at Antioch, *Acts 11. 26. and 13. 14. and 14. 27.* And at Troas, when the Disciples came together to break Bread upon the first day of the Week, Paul preaching to them continued his speech unto midnight, *Acts 20. 7.* And to this end Pastors and Teachers were appointed in all Places, for the perfecting of the Saints, and the edifying of the Body of Christ, *Ephes. 4. 12.* And Christians are not to forsake the Assembling themselves together, as it seems some in those Days began to do, either through Carelessness or Fear of Persecution, *Heb. 10. 25.*

And those that ordinarily absent themselves still from the Congregations of God's People, that meet together for God's Holy Service, without just and apparent Cause, it is to be reasonably suspected, that they are either eat up with the World, and Earthly Minds, or are in the Pursuit of Carnal Pleasures, which makes them listless to Spiritual things, and have no true Regard to the Celebrating of God's Great Name, nor to his Institutions, and have but little Sense or Feeling of their own Spiritual Wants.

Wants. It is certain, they have not the Spirit that the Ancient Christians had, nor are guided by the Word or Spirit of God, or right Reason therein; but by their own Laziness, Covetousness, Sensuality, Pride, or some Pique or Passion, that hath the Government of them: For as for their having Knowledge enough, it is a vain Pretence and no Excuse. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Cor. 13. 9. Col. 1. 9. Rom. 15. 14, 15.

Q. And is there to be a stated Order of Officers and Pastors in all Churches, for the Performance of Divine Offices therein, and to whom the Conduct and Government of the Churches is to be committed?

A. At the first planting of the Churches by the Apostles, when they had not time to stay with them long, we do not find that there were any stated Officers settled by them there, because they would not imploy Novices in so great a Work, before they had sufficient Experience of their Abilities for it, and of their Prudence and Conduct for so great a Charge; but Church-Offices were performed by such as seemed to be most able for the present. But this was a Deficiency in those Churches, till they could be brought into more perfect Order. But when the Apostles return'd to visit the Churches which they had planted, and had sufficient Opportunity to inform themselves about these things, then we find there were stated Officers settled. Thus when the Apostles returned to *Lystra*, and *Iconium*, and *Antioch*, they ordained them *Elders* in every Church, Acts 14. 23. So it was at *Jerusalem*, where the Apostles made a longer stay,
and

and where St. James in particular had been left for the Conduct of that Church; that Church becoming very numerous, so that St. James had need of farther Assistance there, we read of *Elders* besides the Apostles, who are distinguish'd from the Church itself, and the Brethren, *Acts* 15. 2, 6, 23. So the Apostle from *Melarus* sent to *Ephesus*, and called the *Elders* of the Church to give them his last Charge at his parting from them, who we find are distinguish'd from the *Flock*, over which it is said the Holy Ghost had made them *Overseers*, *Acts* 20. 17, 18. And that of *Philippi*, where the Apostle had been again and again, *Acts* 16. 12. and 20. 3. we find there *Bishops* and *Deacons* settled among them, *Phil.* 1. 2. But the Apostle not having time to stay in *Crete*, when he was there, he left *Titus* to set in order things that were wanting, and to ordain *Elders* in every City, which is noted as a Deficiency hitherto in those Churches, *Titus* 1. 5. And *Timothy* was left at *Ephesus* for the same Purpose, to do as there was further occasion there, 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. And we find a Prescription of Rules left by the Apostle, which were continually to be observed in the Election and Ordination of such Officers; which had been needless, if there had been no such distinct Order of Men, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1, &c. *Tit.* 1. 5, 6, 7. And we no where find, where there were settled Churches of any standing, but there were such Officers settled. Thus there were in the seven Famous Churches of *Asia*, those who are called the *Angels of the Churches*, who had the Power of Government in it; and the neglect of the Execution of that Government in some of them is noted as their great Fault,

fault, *Rev.* 2. 14, 20. And the Apostle to the *Hebrews* speaks of those that had the Rule over them, and that did watch for their Souls, and that must give an Account accordingly, which supposeth a special Charge that was committed to them, and therefore requireth them to submit themselves to them, *Heb.* 13. 17. And the like we find among the *Theſſalonians*, that there were some, who, he saith, were over them in the Lord, to admonish them; and requireth that they should be esteemed by them very highly in Love for their Works sake, *1 Theſſ.* 5. 12, 13. So that we may conclude, that there were every where to be stated Officers in the Churches that were fully settled, and that the Office of Teaching and Governing the Church was committed unto them; and this was not to be done by others, unless they were Prophets or Spiritual Men, as those were who are mentioned, *1 Cor.* 14. 31. who were extraordinarily Inspired and Endued with Gifts by the Holy Ghost, and these Officers were every where Ordained and Constituted by those that had the Power for it; and were not to run of their own heads, till they were sent, *Rom.* 10. 15.

And these Officers are still to continue in the Church, till the end of all things, or till the Church is fully gathered in, *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12. *Matth.* 28. 20. Tho' Christians may know much, and be able to teach one another, yet still there is need of an Office for that Purpose, *Rom.* 15. 14, 15. For Men are apt to grow forgetful and languid in their Duty, if there be not some to put them in mind thereof, and to excite and quicken them, whose Business it especially is:
and

and therefore there is need of the Ministry, not only to teach, but to reprove, and exhort, and apply the Word to them, *2 Tim. 2. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 12.* So that a Faithful Ministry is to be lookt upon as an exceeding great Blessing, that feed the Flock of God according to the Apostle's Direction, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* where the Elders likewise are again distinguish'd from the Flock. All these things were spoken and done in that Age, when it was said, that they should be *all taught of God*, *Heb. 8. 11.* And when they had the *Uction* mention'd, *1 John 2. 20, 27.* which yet it is plain, was not to exclude the Teaching of the Apostles, and Pastors, and Ministers appointed for that purpose, even then; and much less now, when this extraordinary *Affatus* or Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as was then intended by that *Uction*, is ceased.

Q. What is the Second Priviledge here belonging to the Church, or to those who are the true and living Members of it?

A. Forgiveness of Sin.

Q. What is Forgiveness of Sin? Or wherein doth it consist?

A. It is first to be consider'd, what Sin is. Now Sin is the *Transgression of the Law* of God, which by virtue of the Sanction or Threatning added to it, binds the Sinner to Punishment, *1 John 3. 4.* Whether it be of a positive Law, which requireth any thing to be done; and then it is called a *Sin of Omission*; or of a negative Commandment, which forbids a thing to be done, which is a *Sin of Commission*, and is any Thought, Word,

Word or Deed, which is contrary to the Rule of the Law of God. But where a thing is neither commanded nor forbidden by the Law, either directly or indirectly, that is no Sin, but a Matter of Liberty. For *where there is no Law there is no Transgression*, Rom. 4. 15. Nor *is Sin imputed, where there is no Law*, Rom. 5. 13. For *the strength of Sin is the Law*.

Now in all Sin there are several things to be consider'd. There is the Omission of the Act, which should have been done at such a time and was not, or some Act done which was forbidden, and which being past, when it is past cannot be recalled or undone. And there is the obliquity of the Act, or Omission, in which the proper nature of Sin doth consist, as it is a Transgression of that Law, to the observance of which we are subject of right. Remission of Sin now doth not consist in God's not reckoning or accounting of Sin to have been, which hath been; or in not reckoning the same to have been Sin, which would be to Judge of Facts or Things contrary to their Being or Nature; which can not be supposed of the All-wise God, whose Judgment is always perfectly right. There is also this Property inseparably cleaving to all Sin, that it is highly culpable and worthy of blame, as it is contrary to a Good and Righteous Law, and an Opposition to God, who hath such a rightful Authority over us, and is every way of a very Evil and most Mischievous Nature. Upon the Account of which it must also be always said of it, that it doth deserve Punishment, and that *Death* is the just *Wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. ult. neither doth Remission therefore

consist in God's Esteeming or Judging of Sin not to be culpable or deserving of Punishment, which would be, as if he did judge Sin not to be Sin, and to condemn the Justice of his own Government and Law.

Remission of Sin therefore only consists in God's forgiving, or not inflicting that Punishment, which is the just Desert of Sin; or in dissolving the Obligation thereunto, so that the Punishment shall not be actually inflicted. So that Sin is reckoned as if it had not been, as to that Evil Effect that should flow from it, tho' there be no Alteration made in its Being or Nature, *Matth. 9. 2, 5, 6. Numb. 23. 21.* And Forgiveness of Sin therefore is an Act of God, not as a Judge, but as a Legislator, as having a Power to dispense with a Punishment due by his own Law, when he may do it, with a *Salvo* to his own Honour and Government.

Q. And is there this Forgiveness of Sin to be obtained, which we here profess to believe in this Article?

A. Tho' God did not think fit to pass by the Sins of Men, and to remit the Punishment due to them, without a Satisfaction made, to demonstrate the Evil of Sin, and to shew his Indignation against it; and because we were not able to make this Satisfaction, therefore did not demand it of us; Yet God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them, 2 Cor. 5. 19. The Son of God Incarnate in our Nature, that most Worthy Person, who was in the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, having taken up-

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on him to be a Mediator between God and Man, gave himself an Offering and a Sacrifice for us to God of a sweet smelling savour, Ephes. 5. 2. He putting himself in our stead, God layed on him the Iniquity of us all, Isaiah 53. 6. He bore our Sins in his Body on the Tree, 1 Pet. 2. 24. And thus being made a Curse for us, and undergoing those Sufferings, which the Father thought a sufficient Vindication of his Honour, and a Recompence to him for our Violation of his Laws, He redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, and saved us from those Punishments that were due to our Sins, Gal. 3. 13. And we have Redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins, Ephes. 1. 7. Through this Man it is, that there is preach't unto us Forgiveness, Acts 13. 38. So that God for Christ's sake forgiveth us, Ephes. 4. 30. Rom. 3. 24, 25. 1 Theff. 1. 10. and 5. 9. Heb. 9. 26, 28. This Foundation being laid by the Mediation and Sacrifice of Christ, there is an Act of Grace and Oblivion past, a New Covenant made with Man, and many Gracious Promises of Pardon for our greater Assurance thereof, scattered up and down in Holy Writ to our great Comfort, and exprest in various Forms to that purpose, as a not-remembering of Sin, Heb. 8. 12. a covering of Sin, Psalm 32. 1. a blotting out of Sin, Isaiah 44. 22. a casting of Sin behind his back, Isaiah 38. 17. a removing of Sin, Psal. 103. 12.

And this Pardon that is procured for us is large and full : It reaches to all Sin, of all Sorts and Kinds, except the one unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, tho' they have been never so many, Matth. 12. 31. 1 John 1. 7. Exod. 34. 7. Deut. 9. 9. Isaiah 55. 7. Rom. 8. 1,--33. Heb. 10.

14. And never so great, or greatly Aggravated, as *David's* and *Manasses* was ; and so *St. Peter's* ; *Isaiah* 1. 18. tho' often repeated, and fallen into after Light, and Mercy, and Promises, &c. *Jer.* 3. 1,--12, 13,--22. so as it be not finally continued in, *Ezek.* 18. 24.

But as to the Punishment remitted, which is due to Sin, it is chiefly to be understood of the Eternal Punishment and Perdition of Hell, *Rom.* 8. 1. *John* 3. 16,--36. and of those Vindictive, Destructive Punishments in this Life, that come from God as a Judge, Executing Vengeance upon Men, while there may be still a Reserve of some Temporal, Corrective Punishments to Men, that come as Fatherly Chastisements, and have upon some Account or other a Gracious and Merciful Design of Good in them, 2 *Sam.* 12, 13, 14. *Heb.* 12. 5,--11. So that though there be a perfect Pardon, and Release, from all Punishment whatsoever purchased by Christ, yet it is not to be expected, that it should be given or applyed all at once. We do not find, that God will remit all Temporal and Corrective Chastisements here to the best, nor will he excuse from Temporal Death, tho' he otherwise pardons their Sins ; but the full and solemn Declaration of Pardon and Release from all, is reserved for the Day of Judgment, and Solemn Acquittal of Good Men, when they shall be never more troubled with any Sin or Sorrow, *Rev.* 21. 4.

Q. But is this Pardon, which is purchased by Christ, and granted for his sake, absolutely bestow'd upon Men, without any thing to be done on our parts ?

A. No,

A. No, Christ hath not purchased this Pardon absolutely to be bestowed upon any, but upon their Faith and Repentance only; so that the Promise of Pardon always runneth conditionally; and the actual Grant or Application thereof is suspended upon that Condition; and without the Performance of those Conditions first, through Grace enabling them, no Man is to expect Pardon; and if he doth it, it is vain Presumption, and which there is no Foundation for, *Acts* 5. 31. Christ did not come with a design to save People in their Sin, but to consult his Father's Honour and their Good, by delivering them from it; so that without this, Sin must necessarily end in Punishment and Wrath still; and the Blood of Christ it self, as Precious as it is, shall not save a Wicked Man, continuing still in his Sin. Tho' there be a Proclamation of Mercy made, and Pardon offered, yet it is always upon these Terms; and the actual Application thereof is only to those that do actually Repent of their Sins, and Believe in Jesus Christ for Eternal Salvation, *Acts* 3. 19. *Mark* 16. 15, 16. *Luke* 13. 5. *John* 8. 24. *Acts* 10. 43. and 26. 18.

And yet notwithstanding all this, if the Intercession of Christ's Sacrifice and Purchase, and Faith and Repentance also that is on our side, Forgiveness of Sins, is altogether still free to us, and of meer Grace and Mercy, *Rom.* 4. 24. *Luke* 7. 42. It being of God's meer Grace and Mercy alone, that God sent his Son, to Redeem and Save us, *John* 3. 16. I *John* 4. 9, 10. And that he was pleased not to demand the Debt of Punishment of us, that was due to our Sins, as he

might have done ; but was pleased to accept of his Son's Offering and Sufferings for us, which because done by another, was not our Payment of the Debt itself, but a Satisfaction only, which is a refusable Payment, and therefore he might also have refused the Acceptance of it, but did not, *Eph. 5. 2. John 3. 17.* And since he is pleased also to come to so low Terms as his Faith and Repentance required, which we have Strength also for the Performance of from this meer Goodness ; which Terms are as large as possible, in the very Nature of the Thing. We must say of the Whole from first to last, and of all together, it is of meer Grace, *and that by Grace we are saved, Ephes. 2. 5, 8. Tit. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7.*

Q. What is the Repentance that is required of us ?

A. It begins in a Sight and Conviction of Sin, and of the Evil of it ; and that at first perhaps from the Consideration or Sense of some Mischief or Shame which is like to befall Men from it ; and afterwards from the Apprehension of the Evil Nature of it in it self, as it is a Violation of God's Law, and a great Offence against him, and a thing every way most unreasonable, and unjust, and ungrateful in it self. And this Sight and Sense of Sin is to work in a Man a hearty Sorrow and Grief for what he hath done ; and is to bring him to Confession of his Sin with Shame and great brokenness of Heart before Almighty God ; and to an unfeigned and immediate Resolution to renounce and forsake Sin, and to a present Return to God, with a
steadfast

stedfast and full purpose of Soul to continue God's faithful Servant to his Lives end. So that a Man by this Repentance becomes a new Creature, and liveth no more after the Flesh, but as one that is new Born of God by the Spirit.

So that it doth not consist barely in sorrow for Sin, or in making some Confession of it, even with Grief and Mourning, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. and 26. 21. *Matth.* 27. 4. Nor yet in some good Wishes, or Purposes, or profession of resolution to turn from Sin hereafter, *Isa.* 58. 4, 5. But this Sorrow must be effectual, to bring down the Power of Sin, and to produce a present renunciation of it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *Matth.* 3. 8, 9, 10. *Prov.* 28. 13. *Josh.* 7. 10, 11, 12. And that not of the outward Act only, but of the Love of it in the Heart and Thought, *James* 4. 8. *Ezek.* 18. 31. *Psal.* 51. 10. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Eph.* 4. 22. *Rom.* 8. 6 *Galat.* 5. 24. So that there may be an actual forsaking of all known Sin, and a turning from it, so far as may be, by the Grace of the Gospel commonly afforded to true Penitents, *Isa.* 55. 7. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Acts* 3. 9. And all this not barely from a sense and feeling of some evil or inconvenience that doth attend upon a sinful course; tho' it is at first a good Introduction to what followeth; but from a Consideration of the foulness, baseness and turpitude of Sin in itself, as it is a contradiction to reason, and to the reason and relation of things one to another, and the Obligations to Obedience from the just Authority of God, and from his Love and Kindness, especially in Christ, which doth, above all things, melt the Heart into true godly Sorrow.

So that there be withal a turning to the Lord, and to a course of Holiness, and a taking up of the Commands of God for a Rule afterwards, and a living a Life of Religion and Holiness, *Jer.* 4. 1. *Hos.* 7. 16. *Titus* 2. 12. *Psal.* 34. 14. *Joel* 2. 13. *Psal.* 119. 105. *Isa.* 119. 6. and 1. 16. and all this again continual and steady, without relapse into a sinful Course, by which all that was done before, would be lost, *2 Pet.* 2. 21. *Matth.* 12. 45. *Isa.* 58. 5, 6. and 85. 8.

Not that all Sin will be wholly unavoidable, which will not perfectly be here, *1 John* 1. 8. *James* 3. 6. So that still it is to be lamented, that there may be Sins of Ignorance; which if the Ignorance be involuntary, from his not having sufficient means of Instruction, and there is not the fault of the Will in them, through the neglect or want of application of the means, will not be imputed to him to his Condemnation, as if the Ignorance be affected and voluntary, they will be notwithstanding, *John* 3. 20, 21. *2 Pet.* 3. 5. *John* 15. 22. And because of the frailty of our Nature, there may be also Sins of Infirmary and Surprize; from an unforeseen Temptation, and from the suddenness of Passion, which may exclude all deliberation; and not from the Vitioufness of the Will, which may be still habitually disposed a right way. And such as arise from natural Weakness, or inability of the Mind, as wandring Thoughts or Dulness in the Service of God, when the Spirit is not long able to Intend, or the Body is indisposed, *Matth.* 26. 41. which may be consistent with true Repentance, and the habitual good disposition of the Mind, and a true Conversion of the Soul to God.

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After all which, there is one thing that is to be consider'd, as necessary to a true and through Repentance ; that if the Sin which is committed, be also against Man, that there must be a real and unfeigned endeavour to make reparation for the same, to undo, as much as may be, what hath been done ; so that tho' he cannot unact the Act again, yet, according to his Power, he may put a stop to the evil effects thereof, by which his Neighbour hath been injured, and make him a Compensation for what he hath already suffered thereby, *Levit. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Ezek. 33. 14, 15. Acts 19. 8.*

Q. What is that Faith in Christ, which is Justifying and Saving ?

A. This Matter is variously exprest in Holy Scripture. Sometimes it is exprest more generally, only by a Believing in Christ, *Acts 16. 30. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, John 3. 16. Whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish. And Verse 18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned. Verse 36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life.* Sometimes by believing him to be the Christ, the Son of God, the true Messiah ; which was then the great thing that most was insisted upon, and urged, and argued, and confirmed by the Apostles, in order to the bringing of Men into a State of Justification and Salvation, *Acts 2. 36--38. and 17. 3, 4. John 12. 34, 35. and 20. 31. and 17. 3. and 8. 24.* Sometimes by a Believing God, or in God, with a respect to Christ, and the Declaration and Promises he hath made by him. *John 5. 24. He that believeth on him that*

that sent me, hath everlasting Life. Rom. 4. 3. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteousness; being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Verse 24. It is a believing in him, that raised up Jesus from the Dead. And so again, 1 Pet. 1. 21. Sometimes by a believing or receiving the Word or Testimony or Witness concerning Christ, 2 Theff. 1. 10. Because our Testimony among you was believed, 1 John 1. 2. That which we have seen and heard, declare we, or testifie unto you, that ye may have Fellowship with us, and that your Joy may be full. 1 John 5. 9, 10. The Witness of God, and the Record that God gave of his Son. Sometimes it is called, the Faith of the Gospel, Phil. 1. 27. or a believing the Gospel, Mark 16. 15, 16. Preach the Gospel to every Creature; He that believeth, that is, the Gospel, and is Baptized, shall be saved: Or a Belief of the Truth, 2 Theff. 2. 13. Chosen to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and the Belief of the Truth. That is, the Truth of the Gospel; as that Christ is the Son of God, the true Messiah, for confessing of which St. Peter was pronounc'd blessed, Matth. 16. 16, 17. And that he died for our Sins, and was buried, and rose again the Third Day; which was the Gospel St. Paul preached; and which, saith he, ye have received, and by which ye are saved, 1 Cor. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4. which believing that he died for our Sins, is otherwise called our Faith in his Blood, Rom. 3. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through Faith in his Blood, for the remission of Sins. And so the Belief of God's raising him from the Dead is mention'd again to this purpose, Rom. 10. 9. If thou shalt confess with thy

thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved. Sometimes this is called a *coming to Christ*, that is, to be his Disciple; and a *Receiving of Christ*, that is, as he is declared in the Gospel, as the true Messiah, as Prophet, Priest, and King, *John* 1. 12.

Such a Faith or Belief of the Gospel, as brings us to consent to Christ, as our Teacher, and Lord and Saviour, as our Light and Life and all, is that, on which we are presently received into favour, and are put into a justifying State, and have a Title to Life and Salvation, notwithstanding our many Failings and Infirmities still cleaving to us. Only this our Consent must be followed with suitable Fruits and Acts of Evangelical Obedience, in all that survive. And therefore it must be observed, that this Faith in Christ, or Belief of the Gospel, that it may approve itself to be true and saving, must produce in us Divine and Holy Effects. It must purifie the Heart, *Acts* 15. 9. It must overcome the World, 1 *John* 5. 4. It must make us free from the Bondage of Sin, *John* 8. 32. It must be a working Faith, *James* 2. 20. It must work by Love, *Galat.* 5. 5. That Love that is the fulfilling of the Law, *Rom.* 13. 10.

From all which therefore it may be collected, that Justifying and Saving Faith is such a Belief of the Word or Gospel, concerning Christ, as the Messiah, the Saviour of the World, and a Prophet sent from God, and as made Lord and Heir of all things; as doth effectually engage and prevail with us, to own and embrace him as such; and accordingly to hearken and consent

sent and turn to him, and to depend upon him alone, and upon the Sacrifice that he hath offered, and the Atonement that he hath made for Reconciliation and Pardon, and that brings us in Heart and Life to devote our selves to his Service, and to keep his Commandments. It is such a Faith, by which a Man becomes a true and sincere Christian, and is Sanctified in Christ Jesus, and hath Crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, and walks not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, having a present habitual and prevailing Disposition, Inclination, and Resolution of Soul to forsake all known Sin for the time to come, and to give himself up to God in Christ, to serve him truly all the Days of his Life.

Q. What is the use that we should make of this Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin through Christ?

A. It should make us lowly and humble minded in our selves, and to look on our selves miserable, wretched and forlorn Creatures, and to abase our selves as guilty before God, *Rom. 3. 9; 10, 11, 20-22. Ephes. 2. 11, 12.* And we should admire and praise God for his exceeding rich and adorable Mercy, in providing a Saviour for us in our Lost Estate, and accepting the Sacrifice that he hath offered for us in our stead, and so freely offering Pardon to us for his sake, when we were altogether unprofitable Servants, and had so rebelled against him; when he might easily have taken Vengeance on us that were such feeble and impotent Creatures; that could not in the least resist the strokes of his Almighty Power, if he would arm himself against

gainst us, as we had deserved, *Psal.* 103. 1, 2, 3. *Ephes.* 1. 3-7. *Col.* 1. 12, 14. *1 Tim.* 1. 15, 16, 17. *Rev.* 1. 5, 6.

And now the Price is paid, and Pardon and Forgiveness proclaimed to all the World through Christ, that are willing to come in at the Gospel Offer, and accept of Mercy upon the Gospel Terms, none that do so ought to fear, but that Pardon and Mercy is to be obtained by them. So that the greatest of Sinners ought not to despair, but by accepting the same, ought to give Glory to God, and be assured in so doing, they shall be accepted; and to do otherwise, is to despise Mercy, and undervalue the Merits of our Redeemer, as if there were some Sins above the Merit of his Blood to atone for; which is in itself a very great and provoking Sin, and a great addition to the former Score, *Matth.* 11. 28. *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. *Luke* 14. 16-24. But all ought to come in, and with brokenness of Heart to confess and bewail their Sins, and turn to God in Christ, and then they ought confidently to expect and hope for Mercy at his Hands; whilst those that seem Righteous in themselves, and scorn this Mercy, as if they had no need of it, shall go without it, and shall perish in their Sins, for their own Pride and Sullenness, and Contempt of God and his Mercy, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19, 20. *Luke* 18. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Luke* 15. 18, 20. *Acts* 2. 37, 38. and 16. 29, 30, 31.

Q. What is the Third Priviledge belonging to the Church?

A. The Resurrection of the Body.

Q. But

Q. But the Resurrection of the Body implieth and presupposeth Death first as going before; so that it seems, both Good Men and all must Die, or else they could not be said to rise again?

A. Yes: This is plain, from the Experience of all the World, and therefore need not to be laboriously confirm'd to us, Heb. 9. 27. Psal. 49. 7, 9, 10, 12. Eccles. 8. 8. and 3. 2. Job 7. 1. and 14. 5. Death came in by Sin, and so hath past upon all Men, Rom. 5. 12. And though Good Men have their Sins pardoned here thro' Christ, and the Debt and Punishment remitted, that is due thereunto; yet we do not find that ever it was intended, that Death Temporal should be remitted to them. Christ undertook for their Resurrection from Death, as will appear, to a blessed and happy Life; but we no where find, he undertook that they should not Die at all; nor that it was intended to be included in the Promise of Forgiveness.

*And the Time of Death, we find also, is very uncertain, Eccles. 9. 12. So that this Day cometh also as a Thief in the Night, 1 Thess. 5. 2. And is commonly at an unexpected time, Matth 25. 6. The Time and Season hereof being kept secret by Almighty God, that Men might not harden themselves in Sin and Security, till the time draweth near, and might watch and labour, and not expose themselves to Dangers, or a neglect of themselves and their Work, through a confident Presumption, that their Fate is a great way off, which there can be no danger of hastning; and least sometimes the suddenness of the thing should too much surprize and amaze them, and
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their watchfulness and preparation should be even forc'd upon them through fear, which would commonly destroy the very Nature of Vertue, so that it would be hardly any more a matter of free choice in Men.

Q. What is the use that we should make of Death?

A. Death may be considered under divers Notions, and so may be applyed several ways. Death will in a little time put an end to all our Worldly Enjoyments, so that they shall be no longer possess'd by us; our Honour shall be laid in the Dust, and they that have never so great Possessions, must leave all their Glory and Riches behind them. This should moderate our Affections to all these things, and should Cure our Covetousness, our Pride, and our Vanity, our Ostentation of them, and our Trust in them, *1 Tim. 6. 7. 1 Cor. 7. 29. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Luke 12. 20,--33. Psal. 49. 11. Eccl. 5. 15, 16.*

It will in the same manner extinguish all our Carnal Pleasures, so that we shall feel no more of them; and therefore we may well think they are not of that Value which we often put upon them, so that we are ready for the sake thereof to put away God himself from us, and to commit Sin against him, and often bring upon our selves long lasting Trouble and Misery, *Heb. 11. 25. 1 Pet. 4. 7.*

It parts us from all our Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance, so that we shall be no longer of any use to them, nor they to us; nor shall there be any Delight arising any longer from such Communion, which should teach us indeed

to make the best use we can of one another, whilst we are in the World together; but it should teach us withal, not to place our Affections immoderately upon any Creatures, but to be always ready to part with them, and never to put too great Confidence in Men, nor to rely too much upon them, when they may be taken from us in the midst of all our Hopes, *1 Cor. 7: 29. Isaiah 2. ult. Psal. 146. 3, 4, 5, 6,--10. Eccl. 9: 6.*

It will put an end to all our Actions in this Life, for Soul or Body, to all our Studies and Labours, to all our Callings and Business; therefore we must not boast of to Morrow, or be confident in our Undertakings, but learn Modesty and Humility in all our Designs. But yet we should redeem our Time, and labour to live apace to all the Highest and Noblest Ends of Life, and to be diligent in Business to all Wise and Good Purposes, for the Glorifying of God, and the Promoting our own and others Happiness, according to our Abilities, *Prov. 27. 1. James 4. 3. Eccl. 9. 10. John 9. 4.*

It will reduce the Body it self to Clay and Rottenness; and from thence it may be inferr'd, what a madness it is to venture the Loss of Soul and Heaven and all, to indulge this Flesh, and to live to no other purpose, but to gratify it, and fulfil its Lusts for a while, *Gal. 6. 8.*

It will waft us into another World, into an Everlasting State, either of Woe or Happiness; and the Judgment will be according to the Preparation and Condition we are in when we go hence. This is more than all the rest; and therefore this should make us consider well,
whither

whither we are like to go, and provide for the best, that we may be taken care of when we go hence, by our having that Change wrought in us, which may fit us for Communion with God, and the Enjoyment of him; in which therefore our preparation for Death doth most properly and eminently consist, *Matth.* 5. 8. *Col.* 1. 12, 13. *1 John* 1. 7. *2 Cor.* 6. 14, 17, 18. *Heb.* 10. 19, 22. *Titus* 3. 5, 7. And our removing hence being to be at an uncertain time, therefore we should be always ready, when there is a matter of that vast Consequence depending upon it, and we should still watch and wait, *Matth.* 25. 13. *Luke* 12. 35. *Ecc.* 12. 1. *Isaiab* 55. 6.

Q. But doth not the Soul also die with the Body, and continue in Death, till the Resurrection of the Body?

A. If the Soul were nothing else but the Modification or Motion of the most Fine and Active Parts of that Matter of which the Body consists; then when the Body dieth or is dissolved, the Soul must needs of course die with it. For the Mode of any thing can no longer continue, than the Thing it self doth, of which it is the Mode: Or if the Soul it self were a Material Being, and so consisting of Parts, of which there might be a Division or Separation of one from the other, it might be in the same manner lyable to Putrefaction or Destruction, by the Dissolution of those Parts, as the Body is. But it is very reasonably to be concluded, that the Soul is of another Nature from the Body, and is not Material as the Body is; and therefore

tho' it may be lyable to Annihilation, if he that made it please to put an end to its Being, by his own Supernatural Power, yet it is not in it self, and its own Nature lyable to Putrefaction, Corruption or Death; which ariseth from the Dissolution of Parts, which the Soul being Immaterial hath not. The Body was first Finish'd and Organiz'd in the first Creation, being form'd of the Dust of the Ground; and then the Soul was immediately breath'd into it by God, without mention of any Matter of which it was made: So that the Soul and Body are two distinct Things, tho' here by a Vital Union conjoin'd, *Gen. 2. 7.*

And as far as we can judge of the Nature of Things, by their Properties and Acts, the Soul hath no Cognation, or any Agreement with Matter in either, and therefore is not Matter. We know no other Properties belonging to Matter, but such as these; that it is a Solid Thing, hath Parts, and Extension, and Figure, and is Impenetrable, or cannot be in the same Place or Space with other Matter, and is capable of Motion or Rest: And the Powers and Acts which it Exerts, by virtue of Motion annex to it, are such as Drawing, Driving or Impelling one Part or Particle by another, out of one Place or Space to another; or of Heating, Cooling, Moistening, &c. by the sensible Qualities which are suppos'd in it. But there are quite other sorts of Powers and Acts which we find in our selves; that we have Feeling and Sensation of things, and of their Agreeableness or Disagreeableness to us, and of Pain and Pleasure arising therefrom; and have a Power of
reflecting

reflecting upon them, and of making a Judgment of them, and reasoning about them: We have a Power of considering of things past and to come, as well as those that are present; of things remote and at a distance, as well as near; of Universals and abstract Notions, that are not the Objects of Sense, as well as Singulars and Individuals. And we have a Power of Willing, Choosing, or Refusing, according as we please, or as things are by the Judgment represented to us. And what Agreement now have Sense, Reason, Judgment, Thought or Will, with Extension, Figure, Length, Breadth or Thickness? And how absurd would it be, to say, a Thought or Will is of a long or short Figure, broad or round, or angular or curve, or that it is cold or moist, &c.? Or to confound Judgment and Reflection made upon the Natures and Properties of things, with the meer Motion or Pulsion of the Parts of Matter, one upon or by the other? And seeing we can no otherwise judge of the Natures and Essences of things, than by their Properties and Acts, being not able to look intuitively into the Essences themselves: And seeing here we discern Powers and Acts, that are so wholly different in Soul and Matter, we have reason to conclude, that the Soul is not Matter, and consequently not subject to the Laws of it.

Besides all which, we find in our selves a great and vehement Appetite after a long and interminable Duration, and more perfect Happiness than this World can afford, which seems Natural to all, and therefore Implanted by the Author of Nature in us; and which yet would be in vain, if the Soul were to survive no longer than the

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Body doth, as those Faculties and Powers also would be with which we are Endued ; which seem too great than to be intended for the short Imployment of this Life only.

And therefore we find St. Paul desire to be dissolved, and *to be with Christ*, which at Death he expected to be, *Phil. 1. 23. 24.* whereas it would have been really much more desirable to continue longer, to serve Christ in Life here, than to lie in an unactive State in the Grave, where he could not be said either to live to Christ, or to be with him ; but he knew this, *2 Cor. 5. 6.* That *whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord* ; and therefore saith he, *we are willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord*, which if the Soul did die or sleep with the Body, there could be no Sense in. But henceforth, saith he, *there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*, *2 Tim 4. 8.* And *Blessed are the Dead, that die in the Lord, from henceforth*, *Rev. 14. 13.* As our Saviour told the Penitent Thief, *this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, *Luke 23. 43.* when his Body was all the while upon Earth, and in the Power of the Roman Soldiers. And the Apostle saith, *2 Cor. 12. 2.* *He knew a Man*, meaning himself, *caught up to the third Heaven, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, he could not tell* ; which is a plain Demonstration, he did believe, that the Soul might Exist out of the Body. And our Saviour solemnly tells us, that Men cannot kill the Soul as they may the Body ; which plainly sheweth us, that the Soul may Live, when the Body Dyeth, *Matth. 10. 28.* But God can destroy it ; the destruction of the Soul being not to be meant of the Substance of it,
but

but of the Punishment of Hell ; which we find by our Saviour, was actually Executed upon that Wicked Rich Man, whose Soul was already Translated to a Place of Pain and Torment, whilst the Gospel Offer continued, and before the Resurrection, *Luke 16. 23.* The Consideration of all which should make us so much the more studious to work out our Salvation ; and should make Death so much the less grievous to Good Men ; and should make them rather long for it, as it did *St. Paul*, because the sooner they Die, the sooner they shall be invested with Glory, *2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, &c.*

Q. What then is to be done by us, that we be delivered from the Fear of Death, and may become willing to die ?

A. The Belief of a Future State of Blessedness after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Body at last to Life also, would certainly do all, if we could be sure of it, that this will be our Part and Portion : But it is impossible, that thus we can be upon good Grounds, unless by a plain and easy Reflection upon our selves, and a just Consciousness of our State, we are withal assured, that we are thoroughly come up to the Terms of the Gospel, to which Pardon and Life are promised ; which we cannot Rationally be, whilst any Sin or Lust hath any considerable Power in us, tho' the main Strength of it be brought down ; or till we are arrived to such an Eminent Degree of Holiness, that we are fully on God's side, and are no longer like Borderers between two Kingdoms, and that sometimes do Service to one, and sometimes to the

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other,

other, so that it is hardly to be known to whom of Right they belong. For if we have any Sin, that hath any considerable Power in us, Sin will bring Guilt, and Guilt will bring Fear; and Fear will damp and spoil all; so that Men in that case, must needs be in a State of continual doubts, tho' yet they may have so much Hope, as may support them above Despair. And therefore our only way is, as much as may be, to labour to get Sin thoroughly down, and to perfect Holiness in the Fear of the Lord, by still making new Additions and Improvements in our Graces, that our Growth may be visible to our selves; and by trimming our Lamps, and making them burn Bright, 2 Pet. 5. 10, 11. And then we may rejoyce in Christ, who hath taken away the Sting of Death by his Dying, and will assuredly give us the Victory over Death it self at the last, 1 Cor. 15. 57.

But tho' this be the main thing, yet the frequent Meditation of Death, to make it familiar to our Minds, will tend very much to abate the troublesome Apprehension of it, which therefore we should inure our selves to; and one would think we could not avoid it, having such frequent *Memento's* of it before us. And this will help us to get Mortify'd Affections to the World, and all its Profits, and Pomps, and Pleasures, which is another great Point to make us willing to leave it; when there is not only the shortness and uncertainty of these things, to make us abate our Respect to them, but their littleness and unsatisfactoriness to make us truly Happy, which we plainly find in them, Eccl. 2. 11, 22. and 3. 18, 19, 20.

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But we should be fully satisfy'd withal of God's Authority to call us away, when he hath done with us, he being the Arbitrator and Disposer of Life; and as he gave, so he may take away, as he pleaseth, we and all we have being perfectly and fully his own; and therefore we must fully own our selves to be at his Disposal, and must quietly acquiesce in our Master's Will, *Rom. 9. 20, 21.*

But we should labour also to be fully perswaded of the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Power of God, to govern the World, and to take care of our Children, and Relations, and the common Weal, and the Church of God, when we are gone, as much as if we were present with it never so much, that we may not be too anxiously concern'd in our Minds with respect to others. We take too much upon us, and have too high a Conceit of our selves, when we think there is such great need of us in the World, that it could not do well without us. It is better to leave all this matter to God, and we may be sure that he will always do that which is Right and Good, *Psal. 103, 17, 18. Jer. 49. 11. Isaiab 14. 3. and 49. 14, 15, 16. and 26, 1, — 3, 4.*

Q. Shall there be at last then a Resurrection of the Body, as we profess to believe in this Article?

A. Yes. We have a full Assurance of this from the Holy Scriptures, that the Bodies of all Men shall be Raised again at the last, and shall be Vitrally United to their Souls, in order to the Receiving of the things done in the Body; but

shall not be a Blessing or Privilege to all, but only to those that are the Faithful Members of Christ's Church, *John* 9. 28, 29. *Acts* 24. 15. *Revel.* 20. 12, 13. *Job.* 19. 25. *Dan.* 12. 2. And to give us the greater Expectation of this, we have divers Instances in Scripture, of Persons already Raised, as were certainly Dead, though they were not then so Raised, as not to die again, as at last they will be. There was the Widow of *Sarepta's* Son Raised by *Elijah*, *1 Kings* 17. 22. The *Shunamite's* Child by *Elisha*, *2 Kings* 4. And one Revived by being cast into his Sepulchre, and touching his Bones, *2 Kings* 17. 21. *Jairus* his Daughter by our Saviour, *Mark* 5. 39. And a Young Man of the City of *Naim*, that was carrying out to be bury'd, *Luke* 7. 15. And *Lazarus* after he had been Dead Four Days. And our Lord himself Raised the Third Day, upon which the Apostle enforceth the hope of our Resurrection, *1 Cor.* 15. 12. And they that are Christ's Living Members, may hope for it for their Good, by Virtue of their Union with him, by the Spirit dwelling in them, *Rom.* 8. 11.

Nor need this Doctrine at all seem strange, if we consider the Wisdom and Power of God to effect it, *Acts* 26. 8. *Mat.* 22. 28. But rather considering that there is to be a Judgment hereafter, wherein all Humane Actions shall be tryed; and tho' the Soul be the principle of all humane Acts, yet there being divers Works or Acts which are done in the Body, which could not be done out of the Body; and so divers Sensations of Pain and Pleasure, which the Soul hath in its imbodyed State, which it cannot have in its separate State; it seems highly fit and congruous, that
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the Soul should be vitally united to the Body again, in order to its having such Sensation hereafter of Reward or Punishment suitable to its Acts, which otherwise it could not have agreeably to such Acts; so that the whole Man may receive its Reward together.

Q. How are we to conceive of the Resurrection? Or of the manner of it?

A. That, as out of the Seed which is sown and dieth in the Earth, God raiseth up and giveth it a Body, as it hath pleased him, and to every Seed his own Body, 1 Cor. 15. 36, 37, 38. So also is the Resurrection of the Dead, Verse 42. And out of the Matter of these Bodies of the Saints, which were sown in the Dust, as from a Seed, every one shall have his own Body raised, proper to that Seed which was sown; but now in a new Form, Mode or Constitution. It is a Body out of that Body which was sown, 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 44. That Body that was in the Grave, John 5. 28, 29. That Body that was before Corruptible and Mortal, 1 Cor. 15. 53. That was before Vile, Phil. 3. 21. That was Dead, Rev. 20. 13. Out of this Seed and Matter shall be raised a Body, and to every one his own Body, but with other Properties and Powers, suitable to that new State that they shall be put into.

For the Resurrection of good Men being in order to Glory, and to their being put into a full possession of perfect and immortal Blessedness, above what they now enjoy, the Body must be raised in such a manner, and endued with such Properties, that it may be no more a clog or hindrance to the Immortal Spirit that resides

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in it, as here it oftentimes is, in the performance of all or in any of its Acts; but so as that it may be a furtherance and help, so that the Soul being then vitally united to it in its glorify'd form, may be capable of such Acts, Sensations and Injoyments, as may be more noble than those which it could have in its separate State; so that its Union may be an Advantage and not a Prejudice to it; and thereby the happiness of the Saints shall be made more compleat.

Q. In what Mode, or with what Properties then shall the Bodies of good Men at last be raised?

A. First, The Frame and Constitution of them shall be such, that they shall never more be liable to any Decay or Death, or to any Suffering or Pain. For 1 Cor. 15. 42. It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption. And again Verse 52, 53. The Dead shall be raised Incorruptible. For this Corruptible must put on Incorruption, and this Mortal must put on Immortality, Luke 20. 36. They cannot die any more. And Rev. 21. 4. God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying; neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former things are passed away.

Secondly, They shall be endued with inexpressible Beauty, and with the most glittering Splendor, Brightness and Glory, 1 Cor. 15. 43. It is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory. For Christ shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious Body, Phil. 3. 21. And what the Body of Christ is now, may be judged by

by what it was in his Transfiguration, *Matth. 17. 2.* when *his Face did shine as the Sun, and his Rayment was white as the Light.* And by his Appearance to *Paul*, when he saith, the Light of his Presence was *above the brightness of the Sun, Acts 26. 13.* And by that Vision, which *St. John* had of him, when *his Eyes were as a flame of Fire, and his Face like unto fine Brass, as if they burned in a Furnace; and his Countenance was as the Sun shining in his strength, Rev. 1. 14, 15, 16.* So shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father, *Matth. 13. 34.*

Thirdly, They shall be raised with wonderful Strength, Vigor and Activity. For *1 Cor. 15. 43.* *It is sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power.* So that it shall be perfectly at the Command of that active Spirit that doth inhabit it; Sprightly, Nimble and Agil, fit for any Motion, and ready for any Action, without any Faintness, Molestation, or Weariness ever any more.

Fourthly, And they shall be advanc'd so far to the Perfection of Spirits, as to be free from all Ponderosity, Grossness and Heaviness; nor shall stand in need of Recruits of Meat and Drink for their Support, nor of any Sleep or Rest; and shall be quite above all carnal Injoyments, as being beneath their glorified State, in the full perfection of Bliss, *1 Cor. 15. 44.* *It is sown a Natural Body, it is raised a Spiritual Body.* *1 Cor. 6. 13.* *For Meats are for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats here; but then there shall be no need of either; but God shall destroy both it and them.* And *Matth. 22. 30.* *In the Resurrection they neither Marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.*

And

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And now as the State of the Wicked hereafter shall be contrary to the State of the Just, so it is to be supposed, that their Bodies shall be raised in a very different State also, with Deformity and Ugliness, so that they shall look with an hateful and odious Aspect one to another; and they shall be so constituted, as to have the most exquisite Sense of the smartest Pain all over; and yet shall continue indissoluble in that State.

Q. What is the use that we should make of this Doctrine of the Resurrection of good Men?

A. We have the greatest reason of most abundant thankfulness to Almighty God, and of Blessing and Praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, for this Glorious Conquest over Death and the Grave, and for giving us a Promise and Prospect of so high a Blessing, and of Praise and Exaltation in hope and expectation thereof, *1 Pet. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57.* This should comfort and arm all good Men against the fear of Death, which tho' it seem terrible to Nature, as it is the end of Life here, it is indeed but as a Sleep for a while, and shall last no longer than till the Morning of the Resurrection, *Psal. 16. 9. Matth. 20. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.* This would make Maiming and Sickness, and all the present Weaknesses and Infirmities of the Body, more tolerable and easie to us, considering, in time all will be well again, *Job 19. 25, &c.* This should make us the more bold and fearless to undergo all present Hardships, Difficulties and Sufferings for Christ's sake, if we are thereunto called; or whatsoever Cruelties or Disgraces may be offered to our Bodies

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dies alive or dead; as the Heathen threw the Ashes of the Christians Bodies into the River, thereby as they thought to disappoint the rising of them; when at the Resurrection they shall shine so much the more in Glory, *2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17. Matth. 16. 25.* This should comfort and support us under the Afflictions and Deaths of others also, and should prevent an Immoderate Sorrow for our deceased Friends, whose departure from us, though it may be our present Loss, yet shall be no loss to us or them at the last; when they are such, as that we have good hope of them, that they die in the Lord, *1 Thess. 4. 13, 14. Rev. 14. 13.*

But as we have hope of a Blessed Resurrection of our Bodies by Christ, so that we may cherish this hope upon good Grounds, we must see that we consecrate and use our Bodies now to him, and in his Service, and not in any of the Drudgeries of Sin, as Slaves thereof, *Rom. 6. 12, 13. 1 John 3. 3. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 2 Cor. 7. 1. James 4. 8.* This being the way to assure our selves of a happy Resurrection by Christ, that we have his Spirit dwelling in us; which we may know by the Fruits thereof, *Rom. 8. 11. Galat. 5. 22.* We must use our Bodies as the Members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor. 6. 15, 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16.* And devote our selves to universal Holiness, *Acts 24. 15, 6.*

Q. What is the Fourth and last Priviledge of the Church here mention'd?

A. Life everlasting. Of which we have many Promises, *Matth. 25. ult. 1 Thess. 4. 17. John 10. 28. and 6. 47. 1 Per. 5. 4. and 1. 4.*
1 John

1 *John* 5. 11. *Jude* 21. This is the Purchase of Christ's Blood, and procured for us by his Mediation, when we had forfeited Life and Happiness before, and were become liable to eternal Death, *Ephes.* 1. 3, 11.

Q. What is it in which this everlasting Life of good Men is to consist?

A. It is not only to signify an eternal duration of Being or Existence in another World, after the Resurrection; for so the wicked also shall continue in Life; but it denotes to us a State of most perfect and everlasting Happiness; which though it be not revealed to us fully in the Particulars, nor are we able thoroughly to conceive, yet so much is said of it, as may justly raise up in us Wonder and Admiration of that Grace, that bestoweth it upon such unprofitable Creatures as we are.

It is such a State, as in which we shall have a most full and perfect Vision and Enjoyment of God, who is the Fountain of all Blessedness, who will then dwell with his People, and they shall see him Face to Face; God himself will be with them, and be their God. And He that hath God, hath all, *Matth.* 5. 8. *Revelat.* 21. 3. 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. And they shall live in the Presence of Christ in all his Glory, who will greatly rejoyce and delight in them, and they in him, by whose inexpressible Condescension and Love, they are brought to that blissful State, *John* 17. 24. 1 *Thess.* 4. 17. And there they shall be joint Heirs with him, in that Glory that he possesseth, *Rom.* 8. 17. They shall have Crowns and Scepters, 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. And they shall sit upon his Throne,

Throne, *Rev.* 3, 21. Being made Kings and Priests by him, unto God and his Father, *Rev.* 1. 6. And they shall have the Company of none but the bright and pure Angels, and glorified Saints like themselves, in full perfection of Love and Delight in one another; without any Jars or Differences, and without any Weaknesses, to cool their Love, or to abate their Affections, or to give so much as any suspicion thereof, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. They being then eternally separated from all wicked Men, where Lusts and Passions caused so much Sin and Disturbance in the World, and oftentimes brought so much trouble upon them, *Matth.* 13. 41, 49. *Luke* 16. 26. And the place of their Abode shall be there where God himself is in the fulness of his Glory; where is the Court of the great King, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; where he liveth in *Light that is to us now inaccessible*, above what we could be able to bear the glittering and dazzling Splendor of, *1 Tim.* 6. 16. At whose right Hand there is a perfect fulness of all Pleasure and Good, *Psal.* 16. 11. Though no gross or animal Delights, which shall be beneath them then, when advanc'd to that State of Spirituality and Perfection, and incircled with so much Glory.

But then because all Injoyment of good must necessarily be in proportion to the measure of capacity that we are indued with for the reception thereof, therefore that Good Men then may have a perfect injoyment of all Blessedness and Good, they themselves are to be made perfect in their Capacities for it. All that knowledge that is in part, is to be done away, which is here in
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the greatest Men but like that of Children and Babes, in comparison of the clear, plain and perfect understanding that they shall then be advanc'd unto; which shall be like the Meridian brightness of the Sun to that of a Glow-worm; and shall be more like Vision and Intuition, than Knowledge, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10--12. And then they shall excel in all Spiritual Perfection, as well as in that of the Body before mentioned; so that they shall be qualified for the full possession and injoyment of all Good whatsoever. From all which must needs arise infinite Satisfaction, and Joy, and Rapture, in the highest Transports of Praise and Love, above what can be now conceived, *Psal.* 16. 11. and 17. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 9. The result of which is, that they shall be so happy, that they shall never have any thing more to wish for, or desire. For they shall *never hunger or thirst any more*, *Rev.* 7. 16. For that which is the Excellency of all is, that it shall be *an eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *A Crown incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 9. 25. *A Kingdom that cannot be moved*, *Heb.* 12. 28. *An Inheritance that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. So that all this shall be without delay, an eternal Spring of pure and ineffable Delight, which the Saints shall enjoy for ever, still fresh and flourishing, without loathing of what they have, without Want, and without Weariness.

Q. What use are we to make of this?

A. This is a most noble Subject for us to exercise our Thoughts and Minds upon, which so much transcends all the Good of this present Life. Where should our Hearts be, but upon
our

our ultimate end, and our chief Happiness, there *where our Treasure is*, Matth. 6. 21. We should seek first this Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof. Verse 33. Seek those things that are above, where Christ sits at the right Hand of God, Col. 3. 2. For the way of Life is above to the Wise, Prov. 15. 24. And our Conversation therefore should be in Heaven, Phil. 3. 20.

And the Thoughts hereof should make this Life and all the Injoyments of it seem little to us, in comparison of that, which doth so much more excel. It should check our Ambition after these things; it should lower our Delight, and bring down all our inordinate Appetites to them, and deaden all the Temptations of this World to us, Heb. 11. 8, 9, 10, 13, 14-24, 25.

And it should make us endure the Cross with Patience; it should calm and quiet our Spirits in all our Tribulations and Afflictions here; nor should we think much to bear any Pain and Sickness, Wants or Distresses for a while, when we have so great things in prospect, Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Rom. 5. 2, 3, 4. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 13. James 5. 7. Heb. 12. 2. Psal. 126. 5.

And we should not grudge at the Pleasure and Plenty, and Prosperity of wicked Men here, when they seem to have all that Heart can wish; but let them alone for a while to take their ease, and to enjoy their short-liv'd Comforts, when this is all that they are like to have, and when the faithful Servants of God at the last shall be set so much above them; and when the Day is coming, that Light, and Life, and Comfort, and Joy unspeakable shall be to the Righteous ever-

more, *Psal.* 37. 1, 2. and 73. 3, 18. *Luke* 16. 19, 25.

This may well take off from the bitterness of Death, and abate the terrour and fear of a Dissolution, when we have an expectation of such an Immortal Life and Glory, that shall succeed this short continuance in this imperfect State, *2 Cor.* 5. 1.

But above all it should raise up in us high thoughts of the exceeding Goodness, Bounty and Benignity of the Divine Nature; and should produce in us an ingenuous Affection and Gratitude to Almighty God, for making such noble and undeserved Provision, when there is no merit or desert on our Parts; and it should kindle in us an holy flame of Love to him, and should incline us to Worship and Adore him with all our Hearts, and to dedicate our selves to him, *Psal.* 116. 1. and 13. 6. and 31. 23. *James* 1. 12. and 2. 5. *Psal.* 69. 36.

And it should put us upon quick and earnest Endeavours, to give all diligence, to make our Calling and Election sure; and should put all upon labouring with all their might, to get the suitable and proper Preparations for this blessed State, to oppose Sin, and to resist the Temptations thereunto, and to bear the Troubles of Mortification with Patience; to labour for universal Holiness, to work the Works of God with all our might, which will have such a glorious recompence of reward; and to continue faithful therein to the very Death, against all opposition and discouragement whatsoever, *Heb.* 12. 14. *2 Thess.* 2. 13. *Tit.* 3. 4, 5. *1 Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. *1 John* 3. 3. *Matth.* 5. 8. *Psal.* 15. 1, &c. and 24. 3. and 119. 1. *Rom.* 8. 1. *Matth.* 19. 17. *Heb.* 5. 9.

Q. What

Q. What is that State that wicked Men shall be consigned unto after this Life?

A. It is everlasting Death, which is contrary to this everlasting Life. And as everlasting Life doth not only signifie an eternity of duration in another World, but of that which is blisful and happy for ever; so this etetnal or everlasting Death is not to be understood of an Annihilation or Cessation of Being, but of that which is accompanied with everlasting Punishment in the other World, which shall consist in the deprivation of all Comfort and Blessedness, and in suffering and Torments unspeakable, and that for ever. When the wicked are raised again, we are told, it shall be to *Shame and everlasting Contempt*, Dan. 12. 2. And they shall be banished from God, from whom alone all Blessedness and Good doth proceed and flow, who will then no more take any care of them, or have any regard to them. For our Saviour will then say, *Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity*, Matth. 7. 23. *Go ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Matth. 25. 41. For he will come in flaming Fire, rendring Vengeance to them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, 2 Theff. 2. 8. And they shall be cast into a furnace of Fire, Matth. 13. 42. He will burn them with fire unquenchable, Luke 3. 17. *In the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8. *Where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*, Mark 9. 44. But the smoke of their Torment ascenderth up for ever, and they have no rest Day nor Night, Rev. 14. 11.

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And they shall have nothing to comfort them, not so much as a drop of Water to cool their Tongue, Luke 16. 24. When they shall burn with unsatiable Appetite, without any thing to satisfy them. So that upon all these Accounts, both upon the account of what they shall lose and what they shall feel, both the loss and pain will be so dreadful and terrible, that there shall be nothing but *weeping and wailing and gnashing of Teeth*, Matth. 8. 12. and 13. 43. So that their Punishment shall be everlasting, Matth. 25. ult. All which Places denote Suffering in Being, and that for ever; and not a State of not Being, or of ceasing to be, in which there is no Suffering.

Q. But how doth it seem consistent with the Goodness of God, to punish Sinners after this dreadful manner for the Offences they commit, which they lie under so great Temptations to, and yet to continue them in Being for ever?

A. If we consider the infinite Majesty of God, against whom Sin is committed; and how just and reasonable his Government, how equal and beneficial his Law is; and what the State and Condition of Creatures is, and what obligation there justly lieth upon them to serve and honour their Maker; and how they break this Obligation and cast off his just Yoke, and contemn his Authority, and slight his Government, and deny him what is most reasonably his due; and what Ingratitude, Rebellion, Pride, Self-will, and resistance of God and his Grace, there is in Sin; it will manifestly appear, that Sin is not so small a Matter as it is commonly esteemed by sinful Men.

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And considering withal, that God hath set Men here, to be Probationers for another World, and hath given them a very kind and gracious Promise of eternal Happiness to be obtained upon very reasonable Terms; and hath afforded them all the means and assistances that can reasonably be expected, to prepare them for it, and to enable them to fight against the World, the Flesh and the Devil, to conquer Temptations, and to subdue their inordinate Lusts that oppose them; and to grow up to a Divine and Heavenly Spirit and Life, which is a necessary preparative for their advancement to that blessed State; and when God hath tried them, and warn'd and admonish'd them by all proper Methods and Means; and yet nothing will cure or reduce them to a better Mind, and they continue obstinate in their Rebellion, and nothing will amend them; but they persist still to affront God, and to make a perverse Use of all that they enjoy, and sin against Love and Mercy, and the Offers of Grace, and take no notice of Warnings and Calls, and unreasonably transgress the Laws of their Creator, and rather chuse to serve the Devil his Enemy. It is but just for God to reject them, and to leave them in some forelorn State, as Persons past all remedy. As they like not to retain God in their Knowledge or Thoughts here, nor have any thing of a Spirit or Temper conform'd to him, What should they do in his Presence for ever hereafter? What should unholy Persons do in communion with the most Holy God? Or what should they do for ever in the Communion of Saints, that have not a Saint-like Nature? They have no reason to expect a

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Crown or Reward hereafter, when they will do nothing for it, or are any way qualify'd for the same, seeing they have received all the Grace of God in vain, and hate to be reform'd.

And yet seeing Man was made an Immortal Creature, and the everlasting Continuance of Being is founded in God's Original Design in the Creation of Man; and sure God's Goodness is no way to be impeach'd, for giving him such a Being; then he must live some where for ever. And if Men are not fit for Heaven, after all that can be done for them, to prepare them for it, being in love with this Animal and Carnal Life only; and when they will not labour for better Perfections and Acquisitions, and have no care or concern to live up to the great End of their Beings; it is but just with God, to desert and abandon them, and to thrust them down to a lower State; to which also they are naturally bent by the *Pondus* and Weight of their own Corruptions: For their Wickedness makes them of a Nature like Hell; and therefore seeing it is not cured, must end in it, Heaven and Hell having their Foundation first within us. And as Heaven lyeth in an holy and refin'd Temper, and in an Internal Reconciliation to the Nature of God, and the Rule of Righteousness; and that joyful Satisfaction that groweth up with it in communion with him, and injoyment of him; So doth Hell lie in malignity of Nature, and Enmity to Righteousness, and Guilt and Horrour of Conscience, in eternal Separation from God; which is Man's greatest Misery, and the inward State of Hell. And this is the State which Men themselves do chuse; and if they be left in this State,
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and be cast out by God, to live with their Like, or with those of the same vicious and diabolical Temper with themselves, and be deliver'd up into the Hands of those malicious Fiends, whom they have chosen and delighted to serve rather than God, it is but that which they are fitted for. And when the Saints and Servants of God are removed, who were ever an Eye-fore to them, and in whose Company they never delighted; and when God is departed from them, from whose Kindness and Protection all their Comfort and Good before proceeded, whilst they were in their probational State, which is then to be at an end, if all about them becomes meer Darkness, or a burning Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and a place only of Terror and Horror; it is no more than what such miscreant Creatures may reasonably expect.

And when they shall come to have their Eyes open'd, and when they shall see themselves depriv'd of all their former Enjoyments, and frustrated of all their vain Hopes and Fools Paradise, and what Happiness they might have enter'd into, and others now do enjoy, who were once in no better Condition than themselves, if they would have hearkned to Counsel betimes, as those others did; and when their Consciences shall be clearly inlightened to see the Madness and Unreasonableness of all their Ways, and how they have been deluded by the Devil and their Lusts, and how they are now left utterly forlorn and helpless; all this is enough to make them gnash their Teeth for Madness, and to fill them with Horror unspeakable.

Being now sunk into the Diabolical Nature, vexed with Rage, and tormented with Fury in their own Breasts; being forsaken utterly of God's Holy Spirit, weary any longer to stay with them; and therefore being perfectly destitute of the least Degree of Vertue, which before brought them some Ease and Quiet, and without which, it would be Hell even with them here; when at last there will not be one Spark of good Disposition left, but their wicked Nature will be compleat Wickedness, and all their Faculties as it were upon the Rack, in the utmost Disorder and Confusion; their being meerly shatter'd, and all their Passions meer Fury and Outrage, a direful, direful Condition it must needs be, that they will be in: And all this flowing from the nature of their sinful State, which they chose to be in; their own perverse Malignity in its own Nature excluding them from God the infinite Good, and laying the Foundation of all their Sufferings in themselves; so that they must only thank themselves for it, and God and his Providence and Government will be blameless. And this Malignity continuing for ever, which is the Ground and Cause of all their Sufferings; therefore, so must their Sufferings also do. And it is not God, but themselves must be Censured for it, if they do so. Their immortal Nature is from God, but they themselves have laid the Foundation of all their Suffering and Misery.

Q. What may we learn from all this?

A. If such be like to be the Perdition of ungodly Men, as hath been shewn, we must certainly

tainly conclude, that a sinful Life, that leads thereunto, is perfect Frenzy and Madnefs. And that it is nothing else, but the meer Power of Diabolical Delufion, and the ftrength of Luft and Fancy, fo to transport Men beyond themfelves, as to expose them to fuch lofs, in being banifh'd from God, the Fountain of all Life and Good, and to the incurring of fuch Pain and Mifery, as is neceffarily confequent thereupon, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13, 17, 19. and 17. 13. and 4. 18. *Ifa.* 3. 9, 10, 11. However Sin may be difguifed and represented in the World, yet if this be the Wages and Fruits of Sin, as the Scripture represents it, then let the Gains of Sin here be what they will, or whatfoever Pleafures, or whatfoever Charms it hath, it is plain they cannot altogether be a tolerable equivalent for fo much future lofs and pain, *Rom.* 6. 21. And it therefore highly concerneth all that are yet in a State, or under the Power of Sin, to labour to extricate themfelves quickly, and to get out of it; to put off the Old Man, all Uncleannefs and inordinate Affection and Covetoufnefs, and all other predominant Lufts, which meerly ftake them down to Earth and Hell. And we fhould labour to get our Souls wrought into the Divine Image and Nature, that we may be transform'd in the Spirit of our Minds, and may enter now into that Holy State, that we may be prepared for, and at laft may have an abundant Entrance into that everlafting Kingdom of Glory and Blifs above, through Jefus Chrift our Lord.
Amen.



P A R T. III.

The Christian Obedience.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the Ten Commandments ; particularly of our Duty towards God, contain'd in the Four First Commandments.

Q. **Y**OU have now more fully given me an Account of the Second Thing that was Promised in your Name, at your Baptism, viz. That you should believe the Articles of your Christian Faith. Now, what is the Third ?

A. That I should keep God's Holy will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of my Life.

Q. And is this also necessary, as well as Knowledge and a right Faith ?

A. Yes ;

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A. Yes; We are not to be Solifidians: But Knowledge and Faith is in order to practise, and is all vain and insignificant, unless it prepare us for, and engage us to a True Gospel Obedience, *James* 2. 14, 17. *1 John* 2, 3, 4, 5. *1 Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3. *2 Pet.* 1. 8. *John* 8. 55. *Jer.* 22. 16. *Gal.* 5. 6. For tho' Man is not saved now, by the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, the Condition whereof was perfect Obedience; but by the Covenant of Grace, the Condition whereof is often exprest by that Term of *Faith*; yet that Faith, that it may be saving, must purify the Heart, turn it to God and his Laws, and work by Love, and bring us to a sincere endeavour of Universal Obedience; so that Obedience and good Works may certainly follow from such Faith. And the Moral Law continueth ever as the Rule thereof, as it is now set out in the Gospel Edition of it, *Matth.* 5. 17. and 19. 17, 18, 19. and 22. 37, 38. *Tit.* 3. 8. *Acts* 26. 18.

Q. What is the meaning of this Third part of our Christian, or Baptismal Vow?

A. There are four things contained in it.

First, That we are to take God's *Will and Commandments* for the Rule of all our Actions, so as to do nothing contrary thereunto, but to govern our selves thereby in all things that are prescribed to us therein: For God being our Creator, and having given us all our Powers and Capacities to act, He is of right our Governor, and we are his rightful Subjects; and having given us a Law to be a Rule to us, we must govern our selves by that Law; and not follow our own Inclinations or Humours, nor yet the Will of others,

thers, but only in subordination to that Law, *Eccles.* 12. 13. *1 Pet.* 4. 2, 3. *Acts* 4. 19. *Levit.* 19. 37.

Secondly, It is *all* God's Commandments which we must have a respect unto, to make the Rule of our Obedience. We must make it our design, care and endeavour, truly and faithfully to do the whole Will of God; though we shall not in this imperfect State arise to an absolutely perfect and unfinning Obedience thereunto. For all the Commands come from the same Authority, and they are moreover in themselves *all* reasonable and equal and good; tho' all have not an equal tendency to the same end; nor are all Sins that are contrary thereunto, alike heinous. We must therefore make *all* our Rule, endeavour to keep *all*, and not pick and chuse out some that please us best, or that have the least difficulty in them, or that are least repugnant to our Inclinations. We must not content ourselves only in some things to follow God, and in others to live or do as we list, where we are under a Rule, *James* 2. 11. *Jer.* 7. 23. *Psal.* 119. 6. *Heb.* 13. 18. *Luke* 1. 6. *Matth.* 28. 20. *John* 15. 14.

Thirdly, It is not only for a fit that this is required of us, but it must be our common and habitual course, and our daily practice; which is therefore exprest by *walking*, as it often is in the Scriptures, and signifieth more than taking a step or two, *Gen.* 17. 1. *1 Kings* 6. 12. *Rom.* 6. 4. By this is denoted, that every Duty is to be performed, as it occurreth every day; tho' sometimes one Duty must give way to another, that is most necessary for that present time, or is of greater weight

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weight in it self, *Matth. 12. 7.* But no Sin or Transgression is ever to be allowed, by which any one of God's Commandments might at any time be violated by us. *Psal. 119. 128.*

Fourthly, This holy Course is not only to be observed by us for some time only, or for some Days or Weeks, &c. but there must be also a perseverance in it *all the Days of our Lives.* Which, tho' it may seem to tie us up, yet is our true Wisdom and Interest; and is most reasonable in it self. For it is fit for reasonable Creatures always to walk by rule, and that rule is best, which God prescribes; therefore we should never desire to walk by any other. And God's Authority over us is always the same; and his Commandments are always the same, and invariable; and always rational and good, and suitable to the Nature of things. Therefore so should our Obedience also be, invariable, permanent, and continual; that as we begin, so we should hold on therein; to which also the Promises of future Blessedness are only made, *John 8. 31. and 15. 6, 7. Luke 9. 62. James 1. 25. 1 Cor. 5. 15. Rom. 6. 11. Matth. 10. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Heb. 10. 38, 39. Revelat. 2. 4, 5. Psal. 119. 112. Prov. 3. 1. 2 Chron. 15. 2 Hosea 7. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 20.*

Q. What are those Commandments of God, which we are thus to keep?

A. The same which God spake in the 20th Chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage. Thou shalt have none

none other Gods but me, &c. Which, tho' there was then a particular promulgation of, to that People, whom he had chosen for his peculiar People; yet they are such as contain in them nothing but the Law it self, and what is founded in the Nature of things, and their Relation one to another, and so do alike oblige all Mankind; except that one positive Command of a seventh part of Time to be observed as a Sabbath, for Holy-rest, which was given to *Adam* presently after the Creation, *Gen. 2.* And so doth oblige not *that* People only, but all the Posterity of *Adam*. And these Commandments are also vindicated, explain'd, and reforc't in the Gospel-Administration by our Saviour himself and his Apostles; and all the particular Duties contained therein, are urged and prest with more potent Arguments, Promises and Encouragements, than was ever done before; to oblige the Followers of Christ to the Observation and Practice thereof, *Mat. 5. 17, 18, 19. and 22. 37, 38. and 19. 18. Rom. 7. 7, 12, 14. and 13. 8, 9, 10.*

Q. But how doth the Preface to these Commandments concern us, when God spake these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage?

A. He is our Sovereign Lord, and our God, no less than he was theirs; and he hath no less a Propriety in us, and a Right to us, than he had to them. He is our God, and we are the People of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his Hand, Psal. 95. 7. And if that be a reason, Why a People should keep his Commandments; it is a reason

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reason to us, as well as it was to them. For all People will walk, every one in the name of their God, Mic. 4. 5. And we have avouched him to be our God, as well as they; and are no less by a Covenant Dedication become his People, Deut. 26. 16, 17. Mat. 28. 19. And He is our Father and Redeemer too, and that in a more excellent manner than he was to them, in respect of this particular Instance of their deliverance out of the Egyptian Bondage. For he hath sent his Son Christ Jesus, who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all Iniquity, Tit. 2. 14. And this Redemption of the People of Israel from the Bondage of Egypt, was a Type to us of our Deliverance by Christ from the Bondage of Sin, and Satan, and Death. As that Canaan, into which he brought them, was a Type of that Heavenly Inheritance, which he hath promised to us, and which is infinitely Better, and more Excellent than that, Gal. 4. 26. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. And if this therefore was a reason to them to serve their Deliverer, Deut. 4. 20. It is much more to us, Luk. 1. 74. So that we may well say in a more especial manner, Now thou hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments? Ez. 9. 13, 14. Ps. 116. 16, 17.

Q. Wherein are these Commandments contained?

A. In the two Tables of the Law, first given by God to Moses. The first of which contains the four first Commandments, from which we learn our Duty towards God; the second contains the six following; from whence we learn our Duty towards our Neighbour. Concerning both which,

which, we are first to consider the general Scope, and End, or Design thereof; and then the Particulars that are contained in each.

Q. What is the general Scope and Design of the first Table, which contains the four first Commandments, from whence we learn our Duty towards God?

A. It is to direct and settle the Worship of God, our Creator and Redeemer; that the same may be duly rendred, and preserved Whole and Intire to him: Forasmuch as we owe our Beings, and all the Good we have to him, and therefore ought in all Reason to own and acknowledge him, to express our dependance upon him, and our high Esteem of him, and to Worship him accordingly. Nor can it be any thing else but downright Ignorance, Pride, Atheism, or monstrous Stupidity to neglect, or not duly to perform the same, or to give any Share thereof to any other. For, this is the first and greatest Commandment, Mat. 22. 37, 38. So that let Men be never so exact and careful of their Duty towards Man, yet if they do not like to retain God in their Knowledge, and to Worship him accordingly; if they have an evil Heart of Unbelief to depart from the Living God, and their Heart is far from him; If they forget God that formed them, and do not glorifie him, in whose Hand their Breath is; or if they profess that they know God, and in Works do deny him, their Sin is great, and the Wrath of God is revealed against them, Rom. 1. 28. Heb. 3. 12. Matth. 15. 8. Deut. 32. 18. Dan. 5. 23. Tit. 1. 16. Rom. 1. 18. For here our Duty in all reason ought to begin, to Worship God,
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we being more obliged to him, than to all the World ; because *in him we live and move and have our Being* ; and from him we receive our Life and Breath, and all things, Acts 17. 28, 29.

Q. Which is the first Commandment of this first Table of the Law, that concerneth Almighty God ?

A. Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.

Q. What is the scope and design of this Commandment ?

A. It is to direct us in the Object of our Worship, or to shew us who it is, whom we are to think, esteem and own for the true God in our Minds ; and implieth or contains in it the Sum of the inward Worship which we are to render to him ; and which must be preserved intirely to himself, and given to no other.

Q. What doth this Commandment then require of us ?

A. That we should take and propose to our selves the God of Israel only, and no other, so much as in our Thoughts, for the true God, and our God. And accordingly, that we are to Believe in him, to fear him ; to Love him with all our Heart, with all our Mind, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength ; to worship him, to give him Thanks, to put our whole Trust in him, to call upon him. And not to give this Worship and Honour that is due to him, to any other besides him.

Q. Why

Q. Why must we take the God of Israel only, and no other, for the true God, and our God, and accordingly believe in him, &c?

A. Because he only hath shewed himself to be God, by his mighty Works, above all that are called Gods; and He is the great Creator, and supream Governor of the World; and is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gracious and merciful Father in and through him; an eternal and infinitely perfect Being; so that he is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, and there is none besides him; and therefore to be Worshipped only as God. So that we must not perform any Act, which is by the Law appropriated to him, to any other; which to do, would be Idolatry in the *Construction of the Law*. Nor yet are we to perform any Act to another, which doth suppose Excellency therein, which is in him alone, which would be Idolatry in the *Nature and Construction of the Fact*. Nor must we value, respect or esteem any thing in comparison of him. But we must joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, that shall not be forgotten, Jer. 50. 5. Let others chuse whom they will serve, we must serve this Lord alone, Josh. 24. 15-21. Him only we must Worship, and him we must serve, Matth. 4. 10. We must put away all strange Gods, and serve the Lord only, 1 Sam. 7. 3, 4. We must say, O Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant, Psal. 116. 16. And, O God, thou art my God, Psal. 63. 1. There shall no strange God be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange God, Psal. 81. 8. For, thou art the God, even thou alone, 2 Kings 19. 15. The Lord, He is God; the Lord,

He is God, 1 Kings 18. 39. For the *Lord our God is one Lord*, Deut. 6. 4. Isa. 44. 6. 1 Cor. 8. 4, 6. Deut. 4. 35, 39. Isa. 45. 5, 6—18—21. Psal. 96. 4, 5, 6. and 135. 15. And we must take heed therefore, that we do not incur the guilt of Atheism or Irreligion, in neglect of, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God; nor yet the Guilt of Idolatry, in giving God's Glory to another; which as it is done by bowing the Knee to Idols, so it is no less committed, when we love, fear, or trust in any Creature, equally with, or above God, 2 Tim. 3. 4. Col. 3. 5. James 4. 4. Phil. 3. 19. Ezek. 14. 4. Jer. 17. 5. And so when we give the Glory of any Action, Excellency or Event to our selves, or any other, and not unto God, Hab. 1. 16. Acts 12. 22, 23.

Q. What is it to Believe in him?

A. It is to believe him to be, and to be the only true God, in opposition to Atheists and Idolaters; and to believe his Providence and Government of the World; and *that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*; of all which there is such plain and clear Evidence, partly from reason it self, and much more from Scripture, Heb. 11. 6. This is the Root and Foundation of all, without which there could be no Worship due to him, or not to him only. To which yet must be added the Belief of the Excellency and super-eminency of his Being, and of all his glorious Attributes, and that he is really such a one, as he is, the Most High; without which the Belief of his Providence would be very weak, and the Worship and Service we per-

perform to him, would be very lame and slight and imperfect. But we must only own him, and no other; one first and infinite Being, from whom all things are derived. The first and infinite Being, being necessarily but one, and enough to produce all besides; so that we may Worship him as such, there being no need or cause to have regard to any more.

But that which seemeth chiefly to be intended, is the Belief of the Revelation of the Doctrine which he hath made in his Word, being assured that the Holy Scripture is such; and the giving a firm assent thereunto, and receiving the same, and acting suitably to such a Faith. We ought certainly to entertain every thing, of which we have good evidence, that it comes from God with all alacrity and readiness, *Gal. 1. 15, 16. 2 Chron. 20. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Gen. 15. 6. Rom. 4. 19.* Because God is true, and cannot and will not deceive; and all his Declarations and Promises are most faithful, so that we may certainly depend upon whatever he saith, especially considering that he hath Power joyned with Faithfulness to bring the same to pass, *Heb. 11. 11. Revel. 22. 6. Rom. 4. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Deut. 7. 9. Psal. 119. 138. and 89. 35, 37. Isa. 55. 3. Psal. 111. 5, 9. Numb. 23. 19. Josh. 23. 14.*

But that which our Faith is especially to have respect unto, is that Record that God hath given of his Son Jesus Christ, and of Salvation by him, *1 John 5. 9, 10. Job. 3. 33-36. and 6. 29. Rom. 10. 9. 1 John 3. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 15.* So that this is what we are principally bound unto, *viz.* to receive Christ and his Word into

our Hearts, *Matth.* 17. 5. *John* 1. 12. and 7. 16. and 18. 37. and 8. 47. *Matth.* 7. 24.

Q. *What is it to fear God?*

A. It is to have such an holy and humble awe and reverence of the Divine Majesty, join'd with an high esteem of him, and love to him, as produceth in us a care to please him, and to abstain from all those things, which may argue any neglect or contempt of him, or that might any ways provoke or offend him. And it is therefore always joyn'd with a sincere endeavour to depart from evil, *Job* 28. 28. And for want of this it is, that there is so much Sin and Wickedness in the World, *Mal.* 3. 5. *Psal.* 36. 1, 2. *Rom.* 3. 18. *Deut.* 25 18. *Gen.* 20. 11. And it is so essential and necessary to a State of Religion, that Religion it self is often described by it; because when this fear is well fixed and rooted in the Heart, all other Parts of Righteousness and Holiness will naturally follow and flow from it, *Eccles.* 12. 13. This will excite and prompt Men to worship and adore him, and to express the humblest Carriage and lowest Prostration of Soul and Body before him, *Psal.* 5. 7. And when this Fear is wanting there will be the want of that also, *Job* 15. 4. It will make us pliable to his Will in all that he commands us, and quietly to submit to him in all Cases whatsoever, and to labour after Universal Holiness, *2 Cor.* 7. 1. *Heb.* 12. 28. *1 Sam.* 12. 24. It will engage and quicken us to a performance of all our Duty to Men, and to do nothing that is Unrighteous or Unjust in our Carriage towards them, *Neb.* 5. 15. *Gen.* 42. 18. *Exod.* 18. 21. *2 Chron.* 19. 9.

19. 9. *Gol.* 3. 22. *Ephes.* 5. 21. *Levit.* 19. 14, 32. It will guard and defend us against all other Inordinate and perplexing fears, whereby we should be either disquieted in our Spirits, or frightened into the Commission of any Sin, *Isa.* 35. 3, 4. *Prov.* 14. 26. *1 Pet.* 3. 14, 15. *Exod.* 1. 17. *Prov.* 23. 17, 18. This Fear of God we ought always to labour for, and to cherish and maintain in our selves, *Deut.* 6. 13, 14. and 10. 12--20. and 13. 4. *Prov.* 3. 7.

Q. Why must we thus fear God?

A. Because he is our Sovereign Lord and King. He judgeth the Folk Righteously, and governs the Nations upon Earth. And He will be a Revenger sooner or later, upon all those that go on still in their Sins; He will wound the hairy Scalp of his Enemies, and they that rebel against him shall not prosper, *Psal.* 99. 1. *Eccles.* 3. 14. *Isa.* 59. 18, 19. *Rev.* 15. 3, 4. *Dan.* 6. 26. *Jer.* 2. 19. *Deut.* 28. 58, 59. And he is an Omnipotent God, who hath all Power in himself, and is the Lord of Hosts, and hath the Power and Command over all Creatures, whereby he is able to save or destroy, and to do whatsoever he pleaseth, and none can escape or deliver themselves out of his Hand, when once he is angry, *Mal.* 1. 6. *Jer.* 5. 21, 22. and 10. 5, 6, 7. *1 Chron.* 16. 25, 26, 27. *Psal.* 33. 6, 7, 8. *Isa.* 8. 12, 13. *Matth.* 10. 18. *Psal.* 76. 11, 12. And he hath an infinite and unlimited Presence, to discover all that is done by Men, and is acquainted with every Person, and every Action in the World, *Prov.* 15. 3. 11. *Jer.* 23. 23.

And yet after all, his Goodness to us is so very large and great, and doth justly deserve the utmost Respect and Reverence from us, that we should carry it towards him with the most ingenuous regard, as Children do to a kind and loving Father, 1 *Sam.* 12. 24. *Psal.* 130. 4. *Hos.* 3. 5. 1 *Kings* 8. 37--40. *Fer.* 5. 23, 24. Upon which account therefore this Duty of Fear is to have a mixture of Love in it, as supposing in the Object not a bare Superiority of Power and Majesty, but as joyn'd with Goodness and Beneficence. And upon this account these Commands are joyn'd together. And by this, this holy fear is distinguish'd from that slavish dread and horror which hath respect to Power only, as it seems hurtful and cruel; which, where Love is, is cast out, 1 *John* 4. 18. That being the dread of Vassals or Slaves, not the reverence of Sons, and which therefore drives Men farther from God through Fright and Despair, *James* 2. 19. and is unworthy of God, who is Love and Goodness, as well as Power and Majesty.

To all which may be added, as a Reason and Ground of this Reverence and Fear, the Consideration of our own Littleness, Meanness and Inability, in any case to vindicate or help our selves; which should make us therefore humble and submissive, and to cast out all Pride and Self-confidence and Security, which is apt to cause slighting and contempt of God and his Commands, as it did in *Pharaoh* and *Senacherib*; whereas we are but little things, and have no more Strength than what he is pleas'd himself to give us, *Psal.* 76. 5, 6, 7. *Isa.* 40. 6, 7, 8. compared with Verse 12. 15, 16, 17.

Besides

Besides which, to encourage us to this Fear of God, as it is productive of Universal Obedience, there are so many Promises made, *Pf.* 25. 12, 13. *Prov.* 14. 27. *Eccl.* 8. 12. *Psal.* 24. 7, 9. *Prov.* 10. 27. *Psal.* 111. 5. *Mat.* 4. 2. *Pf.* 103. 17. and 145. 19. *Luk.* 1. 50.

Q. What is it to Love God?

A. It is to have an high Esteem of God in our Judgments, as the chiefest Good; and accordingly to Think of, Chuse and Prefer him above all; so as to delight in him, and to long after more of the Knowledge of God, and Acquaintance with him. Which is to love God *with all the Heart, and with all the Soul, and with all the Mind*, when we have the Understanding, Will and Affections all engaged herein, *Pf.* 73. 25, 26. and 4. 6, 7. and 37. 4. and 63. 5. And this will stir up an earnest desire of having more Union and Communion with him; and to that end of being made more like him, and more Conformable to him; and to partake more of his Presence and Influences, and to that end to long after, and to delight in his Ordinances, and the Communion of Saints, and to talk with him in Prayer, and to be hearing of him, and of his Love in his Word, and to love to be praising of him, and setting forth his Excellencies, *Pf.* 84. 1, 2, &c. and 42. 1, 2. and 119. 97, 103, 167. and 26. 8. And this will make us Careful, and desirous to Please him well in all things, and to take heed that we do not in any thing offend him: It will engage us to keep his Commandments, and to do his Will, *Jos.* 22. 5. and that not with Difficulty or Weariness, or by Halves,
or

or for Form-sake; but it will make his Yoak easie, and his Burthen light, so that his Commandments will not be grievous, 1 *Jo.* 5. 3. 2 *Jo.* 6. *Job.* 14. 15. And it will make us love all that bear his Image, for his Image sake that is in them, 1 *Jo.* 4. 8. 20, 21. It will make us jealous for his Honour, and concern'd for his Interest and Kingdom, and grieved at the Offences that are committed against him, *Pf.* 119, 136, 139, 158. 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. *Pf.* 139. 21, 22. It will make us ready to part with all things if need be, for his sake; and to value nothing in Comparison of him, *Phil.* 3. 8. *Mat.* 10. 37. *Pf.* 63. 3. Because we shall look upon him, as the only felicity of our Souls; and that there is more Joy and Happiness to be had in, and from him, than in all the Honours, Pleasures, Friends, or Satisfaction of the World, that may any way pretend to Rival with him; and therefore we shall choose to Serve and Obey him in the use of all our Faculties, Powers and Talents whatsoever; to lay out our Estates and Lives, and all for him; and not desert a Duty, or commit a Sin for the sake of any of all these things; but shall rather deny our selves, and bear any Cross, Loss, or Damage whatsoever, that we may retain his Love, and keep his Favour. So that we may be said to love him *with all our Might*, *Mat.* 6. 24. and 16. 25.

Q. What is the ground and reason, why we must thus love God?

*A. The Reason and Ground of Love, is always some Excellency and Goodness, that is apprehended to be in the Object Beloved, that is
someway*

someway suitable to us, or conceived so to be, to supply our Emptiness, or to fill up our Wants; which is the cause of our turning our Hearts to it, to desire it if Absent, and to delight in it when Present. Now there are infinite and transcendent Excellencies and Perfections in God, High, Glorious, and Unchangeable, without any Want, Imperfection or Weakness. And he is the Author and Original of all that Blessing or Good that we, or any of his Creatures are made Partakers of. *Psal. 119. 68. Thou art Good, and doest Good.* So good, that there is none like him. *There is none good, but one, that is God, Mat. 19. 17.* He is the Fountain of our Being, and of the Being of all things, *Rev. 4. 11. Every good Gift comes from him, Jam. 1. 17.* He Preserveth, and Maintains us all, *Psal. 145. 9. and 36. 7. and 68. 19. and 107. 8. Act. 17. 27. Neh. 9. 6. Job 12. 7. Act. 14. 16.* He is Gracious and Merciful even to those that are Enemies against him without Cause, *Luke 6, 35. Lam. 3. 22. Ps. 111. 4. and 103. 8.* And not only in common things, and in a common way, but in the greatest Instances. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, *Rom. 8. 32. 1 John 4. 8. Job. 3. 16.* And by him he hath made Provision of all Blessing and Good for us, *Eph. 1. 4. Being not willing that any should Perish, 2 Pet. 3. 9.* So that we may well say, as *Zec. 9. 17. How great is thy Goodness, and how great is thy Bounty? God is Love, 1 John 4. 8.* He never will, or doth do any thing but that which is right. His Government and Commandments are Right and Good, *Mic. 7. 8. Prov. 8. 6, 7, 8.* And so are all his Judgments, *Job 34. 10, 11, 12. Deut. 32. 4.*

And

And all his other Attributes in conjunction with his Holiness, Righteousness and Goodness, render him so much the more Amiable and Excellent. Knowledge and Wisdom, separate from Goodness, would be meer Craft and Treachery. But God, who is infinitely Wise and Knowing, useth his Wisdom only to good ends. Power in the hands of Malice is a dreadful Mischief, and an Instrument of the greatest Cruelty. But God, whose Power is Omniscience, expresseth it, and layeth it out only in doing that which is Good and Right, to encourage and reward the Virtuous, and Protect the Innocent, and to release the Oppressed, and to curb the Vicious and Violent; and to Provide for, and Sustain that great Family of his Creatures, which he is the Father and Lord of. And he never Afflicts or Punisheth, but when the meer Necessities of Government, and the preserving of Order in the World do call for it, *Lam. 3. 33. Psal. 119. 75.* And should not such a Glorious, Excellent, and Beneficent Being as this, be loved by us with all our Hearts? (*See before, in the Attribute of God's Goodness.*)

Q. What is it to Worship God?

A. It is to Own, Acknowledge, and Honour God's Infinite and Sovereign Perfections above all; and to Testify and Express this our Acknowledgment and Honouring of him, by the most humble Carriage, and subjecting our selves to him, both in Body and Soul, in Thought, Word and Behaviour, in a Way, and Manner, and Degree appropriate to himself alone; by Admiration, Adoration, Faith, Love, Prayer, Praise,

Praise, and the diligent observance of all his Ordinances; and by the lowest Humiliation and Prostration of our selves, in case of any Omissions, Failures, and Miscarriage. This there is abundant ground for, in the most adorable Perfections of the Divine Nature, infinitely above, and beyond all, 1 Cbr. 16. 25. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be Praised; He is also to be feared above all Gods,* Deut. 10. 17. *For the Lord our God, is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords; A great God, and Mighty and Terrible,* Job 37. 22. *with God is terrible Majesty,* 2 Sam. 7. 22. *There is none like unto thee; neither is there any God besides thee, according to all which we have heard with our Ears,* Deut. 33. 26. *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun,* Isa. 40. 12, 14, 15, 17, 18. Jer. 32. 18, 19. Psal. 135. 5. Job 36. 5, 26. There is an infinite Plenitude of Being, Power, Majesty and Glory in God, above what can be expressed or conceived. And therefore all Glory and Honour ought of right to be ascribed unto him. Psal. 29. 1. *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty; give unto the Lord Glory and Strength; give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name,* 2 Kin. 17. 36. *Him must we Worship, and him must we Fear,* Psal. 95. 6. and 47. 1. It is the business of Angels to Worship him, and the business of all his Creatures, Isa. 6. 3. Psal. 148. 2. to 13. Rev. 4. 10. Dan. 4. 34. Psal. 68. 4. *Extol him that rideth upon the Heavens by his Name Jah,* Psal. 145. *I will extol thee my God, O King.* Thus we are to walk humbly with our God, Mic. 6. 8.

Q. *Why must we give God Thanks?*

A. Because the Being, Life, Good, and all the Mercies we have, whoever they are, that may

may be the Instruments thereof to us, we do derive and receive from God, as the Author, and Giver of all; from his meer Grace, and from his kind and bountiful Hand, by his Provision, Order, and Government; and by his Over-ruling second Causes in a secret and wonderful Manner, to bring about such Events as he pleaseth. Therefore, we *must in every thing give Thanks*, 1 Thes. 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20. For he *giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things*, Act. 17. 25. *In him we live, and move, and have our Being*, ver. 28. *He giveth us rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness*, Act. 14. 17. Rev. 4. 11. Rom. 11. 36. Psal. 139. 14. and 104. and 145. and 146. and 147. and 148. Health of Body is given and continued to us by God's Government over us, and Blessing upon us; Conducting and Preserving us in salutary Ways and Methods, and warding off Dangers and Harms from us, Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Psal. 42. 11. 2 King. 5. 7. Isa. 38. 16. Mat. 4. 4. 2 Chr. 16. 12. 2 King. 1. 6. So is success in Business, and thriving in the World, getting of Wealth, and increase of Estate, Eccl. 9. 11. Deut. 8. 13, 17, 18. Eccl. 5. 19. Gen. 24. 1. 35. and 17. 20. and 21. 13, 14, 20. and 26. 12, 13, 14. and 32. 10. and 39. 1, 2. 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8. 1 Chr. 29. 11. Prov. 10. 22. and 22. 2. Psal. 127. 1. Honour, and Favour, and Friendship from Men: These things also are from God, and do not only come from Men's Skill, or arts of Address or Obligation, Prov. 29. 26. and 21. 1. Gen. 39. 21. Act. 7. 10. Exod. 3. 21. Dan. 1. 9. John 10. 12. Job 36. 22. 1 Chr. 29. 12. 1 Sam. 2. 8. Dan. 2. 21. Psal. 89. 17, 18. So are Victories and Successes, and deliverance
from

from Enemies, *Eccl.* 9. 11. *Psal.* 33. 16, 17, 18. and 108. 12, 13. and 62. 1, 2. and 29. 10, 11. and 18. 1, 2, &c. But especially, should we abound in Thanksgiving for Christ, and the great work of Redemption wrought by him; for the Covenant of Grace, and Promises, and assistance of the Spirit, and all the Mercy and Advantages that we enjoy for our immortal Souls, *Eph.* 1. 3, 4, 5, &c. *Rev.* 5. 12, 13.

This is all that God hath for all the Benefits that he bestoweth upon us; all that comes to him; and therefore this he doth reasonably expect, and when it is perform'd aright, it is very acceptable to him, *Psal.* 33. 1. *Heb.* 13. 15, 16. *Psal.* 69. 30, 31. and 92. 1, 2. This being a Duty, by which God is more especially Glorified, *Psal.* 50. 23. This being purely for God and his Honour, and so is the purest Act of Divine Worship, and hath less of Self in it, than any other. And therefore this will be the chief Work and Exercise for ever in the Blessed State above, *Rev.* 4. 8.

But that this Duty of Praise and Thanksgiving may be perform'd aright, we are to consider, That it is not only to be a Verbal thing, but it must be done from the Heart, *Psal.* 103. 1, 2. And there must be in it especially, the Exercise of Delight and Joy, *Psal.* 63. 5. and 26. 7. and 100. 2. And love to God must be mixt with our Praises, *Psal.* 18. 1. and 116. 1. And that it may thus be performed by us, there must be an humble Sense of our own utter Unworthiness of any Mercy, *Gen.* 32. 10. *Deut.* 9. 5. and 26. 5. And so of our own Weakness to procure it to our selves, that we may not arrogate

rogate any thing to our selves, which will destroy Praise, *Hab. 1. 16.* But we must have a firm belief of God's Providence, in Ordering and Governing all things for us, *Psal. 75. 1, 2.* and *124. 1, 2.* and *115. 1.* And we must endeavour to understand the weight and greatness of the Benefit, that we may have an high Estimation thereof; that our Praise, and Delight, and Love may be founded in Understanding, *Psal. 47. 7.* and *119. 7.* and *111. 2.* and *143. 5.* and *36. 6.* and *117. 2.* And a Benefit or Mercy is then truly great, when it hath especially a Spiritual Aspect, and respect to our Souls, and our Eternal Salvation, which is above all of the greatest Concernment to us; or if it relate to present things; if it be very Comprehensive, and brings many other along with it, *Psal. 144. 12, &c.* And when the Consequences of it are long, and reach to a long time, so that it is continually teeming with other Blessings, and when it is very extensive likewise, and reacheth unto many, as well as our selves; as a whole Kingdom, the whole Protestant Interest, &c. especially when it was unforeseen and unhop'd for, and unexpected, when a Case before seem'd desperate, *Psal 126. 1.* *Isa. 66. 8.* When a Mercy comes in the Season, in the time of greatest Distress and Fear, *Exod. 15. 9.* *Den. 32. 36.* And when the way of bringing it about, was easy, and without much Trouble or Cost.

Q. How must we put our whole Trust in God?

A. Trust in God is founded upon the Goodness and Promises of God, whereby we are assured

ured, that he will take care of all good Men that serve him Faithfully. So that trust in God for the obtaining of any good supposeth, first, that we are such to whom the Promises belong; and that we perform the other parts of our Duty also, to which the Promises are made; so that we first make good the Condition thereof on our parts. For the Promises being made upon such Conditions, We must first see that we perform the Conditions, and then we may assuredly hope for the good thing Promised, as far as the Promises reach. Thus upon our Faith and Repentance, and living a godly Life, we may and should assuredly, and confidently trust in him for Pardon and Salvation. Because there are many Promises that assure us thereof, upon the Performance of those Conditions. *And he is Faithful that hath Promised.* And to trust in him, is to honour his Truth and Goodness, and to give Glory to him, *Rom. 4. 20.* But for a wicked Man to trust in God for Pardon and Salvation, whilst he continueth in his impenitent State; whatever his Confidences are, is nothing but meer Presumption and Delusion, which will certainly deceive him, *Matth. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. Job 8. 13, 14. and 27. 8. Prov. 10. 28. and 14. 32. Luke 13. 5.*

So we may trust in him for Grace, and the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to enable us, and to carry us on in the way of Salvation; whilst we pray unto him, and use the means he hath appointed for the begetting and increase of Grace. But if we expect or hope for this, whilst we are Lazy and do nothing, we look for what we have no ground for, and our Hope is merely vain,

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Philippians 2. 12, 13. *Luke* 11. 13. *Matth.* 25. 29.

Thus in all our Afflictions, and under all Temptations, whilst we cast our Cares upon him, and whilst we are Watchful and Humble, and walk uprightly before him, and keep in his way, we may assuredly trust in him for his Grace and Comfort, and Help, *Psal.* 84. 11. *1 Cor.* 10. 13. *2 Thess.* 3. 3. *1 Thess.* 3. 13. *1 Cor.* 1. 8. *2 Cor.* 12. 9. *Isa.* 40. 29. Thus good Men have a general Security in all Conditions, which they may absolutely depend upon, that *all things shall work together for good, to them that love God*, *Rom.* 8. 28. And that *God careth for them*, *1 Pet.* 5. 6, 7. And that *he will never leave them, nor forsake them*, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Psal.* 121. 1. And in all their Straits, and Wants, and Difficulties here; they may rest and hope in God for all such Supply, and Provision, and Defence, as he shall see best, and most expedient for them; tho' he may not think fit to advance them to high Places, or Riches, or Honours in the World, *Matth.* 6. 25, to 34. *Psal.* 62. 8. and 125. 1. and 115. 9, 10. 11. and 18. 30.

But no Man must trust in God for what is in it self unreasonable, or unproportionable to his Condition, or unsuitable to his State; nor yet for such or such a particular Event absolutely, which he may have a most vehement desire after. Because we have no particular Promises for such particular good things, or for the removing of such particular Evils. And we may be mistaken in our Judgment about them, and think them to be good, when they would be hurtful to us, and to be Evil, when they are really

really for our Good. And therefore we must content our selves with a general trust in God, with submission to his All-determining Wisdom and Will for what is best, and leave the Particulars to him. Which will be the best way for obtaining a Blessing from him, *Prov. 3. 5, 6. Psal 31. 21, 22. and 37. 3, 37, 39, 40.* All good Men are the subjects of God's Care and Providence, and therefore ought quietly to rest in him for all that may be good for them ; but they must not be Peremptory in their own Way or Choice. Nor must we limit God to our time, or manner of bringing about Events ; but leave all Particulars to him ; *who is the great, the mighty God ; the Lord of Hosts is his Name, and who hath the Command of all things, great in Counsel, and mighty in work, Jer. 32. 18, 19.*

Q. But why must we put our whole Trust in God?

A. Because all Events are govern'd by him, and depend upon his Order and Providence; and tho' he usually suffers things to come to pass in a natural Order and Course, and according to the aptness and fitness of Means, yet all this is with his Concurrence and Blessing; and which, if he is pleased to withhold, or if he is pleased to oppose, nothing shall Succeed. *Jer. 10. 23. Prov. 16. 1, 9. and 21. 30.* And therefore we are often directed, not to trust in our selves, or in the most probable Means or Methods, or in any Creatures whatsoever, alone by themselves, but in Subordination to his Direction and Government; so that all Events at last are made to depend upon him, and not upon them.

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them, *Prov.* 21. 31. *Psal.* 36. 16, 17. and 118. 8, 9, 10. and 20. 6, 7, 8. and 44. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Prov.* 18. 11. *Comp.* with *Zeph.* 1. 8. and 1. *Tim.* 6. 16. *Isa* 5. 21, *Ezek.* 28. 6. *Zec.* 9. 2, 3, 4. *Isa.* 29. 14, 15. *Psal.* 52. 1. *Isa.* 2. 22. and 30. 1, 2, 3. and 31. 1. *Jer.* 17. 56. and 23. 24. 1 *Cor.* 1. 31. For God hath All-sufficiency to relieve us in all Cases, having perfect Knowledge to understand our Conditions, and to provide proper Remedies; and having both Wisdom and Power to help, by weak and little Means, and sometimes those that seem contrary, under the greatest Hindrances and Oppositions, *Gen.* 15. 1, 6. *Judg.* 7. 2, 7. *Psal.* 78. 19, 20, 21. 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. *Isa.* 26. 3, 4. *Amos* 5. 9. *Jer.* 49. 20. And he hath Promised at all times to do that which is best for his People; and he is True and Faithful to his Word, *Psal.* 103. 17, 18. and 106. 3, 4. Therefore we must abandon all Trust in our selves, and all Creatures in Judgment, Will and Affection, and rely upon God above, in all Cases whilst we walk uprightly before him, *Psal.* 40. 4. and 71. 5, 6. *Prov.* 28. 25, 26. *Isa.* 30. 3, 4, 5. *Psal.* 34. 21, 22. *Isa.* 50. 10.

Q. Why must we also Call upon God, or Pray to him?

A. Because it is an act of Worship, which God requireth of us, as we are his Creatures, and have our continual dependance upon him. And so only it is to be considered here in this Place. And there are many and repeated Commands to the performance of this Duty and Exhortations to it, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Matth.* 7. 7, &c. and 26. 41. *Mark* 13. 33. *Luk.* 21. 16. *Rom.* 12. 12. *Eph.*

Eph. 6. 18. *1 Thess.* 5. 17. *Phil.* 4. 6. And it hath been the Practice of all good Men in all Ages, and hath been esteem'd an indispensable Duty by all Persons that have any sense of Religion, and hath been owned as a great Part and Instance thereof. All the Sacrifices of the *Jews* and *Heathens* have been but so many Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and of owning and acknowledging God in all things. And the Spirit of Grace and Supplication most certainly always go together; and where there is a Divine Disposition in the Heart, it will certainly incline and prompt Men to it, *Zec.* 12. 10. *Gal.* 4. 6. *Psal.* 18. 3. and 116. 21. 7. So that it is the Character, and Property only of Atheistical Fools to neglect it, *Psal.* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. and 10. 4. *Job* 15. 4.

It is the natural Result of a Belief of a God and his Providence, and of his Government of the World; and that he doth concern himself with the Affairs of Mankind. It is a most reasonable and necessary Act and Expression of our Worship of him, whereby we Own and Testify our dependance upon him, his Right to us, and Authority over us, and express our Faith and Hope and Trust in him, which are our necessary and natural Duties, whereby we glorify his Wisdom, Power and Goodness. Prayer and Praise is nothing else, but this inward Worship express'd and put into Act, and offered up to God by us. And if there be a God and a Providence, sure he must be Worshipped. And Prayer is but a Collection of all the principal Parts of Worship into one.

And therefore it is very necessary to the very state of Religion, to preserve and blow up this

Holy Flame in the Hearts of Men, and to maintain, and keep up Divine Life there. Prayer doth in its own Nature tend to put the Spirit into a serious frame, by bringing it into the presence of God, and thereby inclining it to an Holy Reverence and Awe; and is therefore apt to leave some Effect upon it, for the Cleansing and Purifying of it. It abstracts and draweth off the Heart from the World, and from those Temptations, that are upon all occasions apt to insinuate themselves. And it raiseth a Man's Heart, and lifts it up, and gives it a nobler Temper than otherwise it would have: It is such a Battery against Sin, That if it be followed home, nothing can stand against it: And by that Divine Relish it leaves upon the Mind, it doth itself incline to the Performance of all the other parts of our Duty well. Provided still, that it be performed aright, and that it be not merely Vapour and Formality. But without it, it is impossible that Religion can be maintain'd, but it will sensibly decay, when Men grow Remiss and Careless therein. And therefore Men's declining, that have seemed to be Religious doth commonly begin here; in that they have grown Negligent and Careless, and Formal in Prayer; whereby their Spirits have been, by degrees, most sensibly changed from Better to Worse, and they have fallen off from their former Vigour, and Fervour in the ways of God, and have by degrees become like other Men.

Q. What is the Second Commandment?

A. Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing

thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Water under the Earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them. For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me, and shew Mercy unto Thousands in them that love me, and keep my Commandments.

Q. What is the Design and Scope of this Commandment?

A. As the former Commandment directs us, who we were to think, and own to be the true God in our Minds; and to the Performance of those inward acts of Duty especially which we owe to him, and to no other, or to nothing else besides him: So this directs us about our outward acts of Religious Worship, that those also may be performed to the same true God alone, and not to any thing else; that we may not so much as seem to take any thing else for God, that is not God; that God's Glory may be every way intirely preserved to him; and all Idolatry, or resemblance of Idolatry, which Men are too prone unto, may be kept off at a distance.

Q. What is it then that this Commandment requireth?

A. That as we are to Own and Worship nothing with inward Religious Worship, but the true God, so we must Worship nothing with

bodily Worship, but the true God, neither. And in order to prevent this, that we must not so much as make any Image, even of the *True God*; nor any Image or likeness at all to bow down to it, or to Worship God in it. But that we must worship and serve the *True God* only, with our *Bodies*, with Religious Worship, as well as with our Souls; and that in the use of those Ordinances and Institutions only, which he hath appointed, and either in general or particular hath given us order for; and not in any Modes of Worship of Man's devising contrary thereunto.

Q. Is it therefore unlawful so much as to make any Image of God to represent him by?

A. Yes; tho' it be intended for a Representation or Symbol of the true God himself, and not only of a false God, or of that, which is not the true God, Deut. 4. 15. Take ye heed; for ye saw no manner of Similitude on the Day the Lord spake to you in Horeb. He speaks of the similitude of God himself, which therefore they should take heed not to make. And therefore the People were corrected for making the Golden Calf; which tho' it was an Egyptian Image, yet they intended as the Symbole or Representation of that God, that brought them out of the Land of Egypt. Psal. 106. 20. They changed their Glory into the similitude of an Oxe that eateth Grass.

It is highly absurd, and unreasonable in it self, and cannot be done, Isa. 40. 18. To whom will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him? Acts 17. 29. We ought not to think, that the Godhead is like unto Gold or Silver, or Stone gra-

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ven by Art. Every thing that is capable of representation by an Image, must have Figure and Shape and Termination. But so hath not God; he being not a Body that hath Quantity or Parts, but a pure Spirit, and invisible; and of that Immensity, infinite Majesty and Glory, that the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him. And therefore every such intended Representation of him must be a meer Lye, and a Diminution of his Infinite Majesty; and dangerous to us, being apt to produce in Men low and mean Thoughts of God, *Jer. 10. 14. Every Man is brutish in his Knowledge; every Founder is confounded by the Graven Image; for his Molten Image is falshood. They are Vanity and the Work of Errors. The Portion of Jacob is not like them, Habak. 2. 18. What profiteth the Graven Image, that the Maker thereof hath Graven it? The Molten Image, and a Teacher of Lies?*

From hence it will follow, that we must never conceive of God, under any Corporeal Representation; or set him out to our Fancies and Imaginations thereby: But we must always abstract our Thoughts from all gross and Carnal, or any material Conceptions. We can have no Conception at all of what his Essence is, as abstracted from his Attributes. But we must conceive of him by his Attributes; as Understanding, Will, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, Truth, and all manner of real and pure Perfections. As a Being, who is from everlasting, and filleth all Places, and is most Wise, Powerful, &c. And by his Works, as the Creator of all things, and the high and Supream Sovereign and Governor of
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the World, and our kind and gracious Benefactor, Redeemer and Saviour. All which are true, tho' not adequate Conceptions of him: He being such a one, as that we cannot find out God to perfection. For being but finite Beings, and of finite Capacities our selves, we cannot comprehend that which is infinite. So that there are but some things only that we are capable of knowing concerning God; and these under different Views, and as it were by parts, as may lay a foundation for Love and Fear, and Worship and Adoration and Faith, and the performance of all other Duties to him; which no Representation by any Image can help us in; and therefore cannot be any way profitable to us.

Q. And must not we Worship God then, in or by any Image?

A. If we must not make any Image of God, most certainly we must not worship him by it. And we find it expressly condemned in the *Jews*, in the Worship of the Golden Calf, *Exod.* 32. And also in *Jeroboam's* reviving thereof, *1 Kings* 12. 28. And also *Jehu's* continuance of the same, *2 Kings* 20. 28. Which we find imputed as Sin; and is by the Apostle expressly call'd Idolatry, *1 Cor.* 10. 7. Tho' it cannot reasonably be imagined, that they took the Calf for God himself, or that they intended it for a Representation of a false God; but meant it only as a Symbol or Representation, to set forth *Jehovah* their Lord by. And therefore the Idolatry of worshipping it, as the Symbol only of the true God, is distinguish'd from

from, and made of less malignity than that of *Ahab*, in his Worship of other Gods, 1 *Kings* 16. 30, 31. Which sheweth, that it is of a distinct Nature from it. And though the Worship in this case may be said to terminate in God, yet passing by, or through the Image, it is in part imparted to that. And so they *Worship the Creature* besides the Creator, God blessed for ever, *Rom.* 12. 25. But God will not have his Glory given to another, nor his Praise to *Graven Images*, *Isa.* 42. 8.

Q. But must not we Worship God with our Bodies?

A. When this is forbidden to be done to an Image or Idol, as being the doing of that to an Idol, which is due only to God, it is implied, that it is due to God, and must be done to him when we approach his special Presence in offering up our Devotions to him, that by this humble Posture of our Bodies, we may express also the Reverence of our Hearts, *Psal.* 95. 6. *O come let us worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.* And accordingly we find it to have been the common practise of the Servants of God in their Worshipping of him, *Gen.* 24. 26. *Exod.* 4. 31. and 34. 8. *Nehem.* 8. 6. 1 *Chron.* 29. 20. 2 *Chron.* 6. 13, and 29. 30. *Dan.* 6. 10. *Mat.* 26. 39. *Acts.* 7. 7. 60. and 9. 40. and 20. 36. *Ephes.* 3. 14. *Rev.* 4. 10. But then we must be sure to joyn the Worship of our Spirits or Souls therewith; that it may be done with the Application and Intention of the Mind, with suitable Thoughts and inward Devotion, with Acts of Faith, Love, Desire, Humiliation, Praise, &c. with-

without which all the Service of the Body is nothing else but Pageantry and Hypocrisie, and was never respected by God when it was alone, *John* 4. 24. *Matth.* 15. 8. *Rom.* 12. 1. *Psal.* 51, 16, 17. *1 Tim.* 4. 8.

Q. And must not we faithfully and punctually observe all God's Ordinances and Appointments which he hath prescribed for his own Worship and Service?

A. Yes, we must, *Luke* 1. 6. we must walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless. We must not think it a vain thing, *Mal.* 3. 14. And we must take heed of growing weary thereof, *Mal.* 1. 13. But we must observe all, and keep all pure and intire, according to his Prescription. As reading the Scriptures, *Col.* 3. 16. *John* 5. 39. Hearing, *1 John* 4. 6. *James* 1. 21. Prayers and Addresses to him both publick and private, *Matt.* 6. *Ephes.* 6. 18. Singing, *Col.* 3. 16. Meditation, *Psal.* 1. 2. Baptism, *Matth.* 18. 19. The Lord's-Supper, *Acts* 2. 42. Catechising, *Prov.* 22. 6. These being all the Instrumental parts of Religion, which are appointed on purpose, to preserve, and keep up, and nourish the same. And it being as impossible to maintain the Divine Life without these, which minister nourishment to it; as it is to maintain the bodily Strength without proper Food and Exercise, *Acts* 20. 32. *1 Tim.* 4. 6, 15. So that if there be a neglect, or slight use of these things, it must needs be, that Men must grow meager in their Souls, and will only keep up a profession of Religion, without Life and Power. Nor ought any therefore to think themselves

selves above them, whatever their Attainments may seem to have been, or though they may have attain'd to an habit of Knowledge and Christian Strength already to appearance, and therefore may think they have need of nothing. It being plain, that by the hurry of Business, and worldly Distractions, and the constant Insinuations of the Flesh and the Devil, the best things are often apt to slip out of Mens Minds, if they be not often called to remembrance, and urged and prest upon them. Which therefore is one great use of the Ministry, and not only to instruct Men in new things, that they did not know before, *Rev. 3. 17. Rom. 15. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 12. 1 John 2. 21. Psal. 25. 9.* And let Men pretend never so much to the Gift of the Spirit, as if that set them above Ordinances, that Gift was never intended to make Men lazy or careless, but to assist them only in their Spiritual Work, in the use of the Word and Prayer, and such means, as God hath prescribed, *Phil. 2. 12. Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13.* It is therefore absolutely necessary to the Christian Life, that we maintain a constant respect to all God's Ordinances, and that we use them well, and not suffer all to evaporate into meer idle formality, which will destroy the efficacy of all Holy Performances, and will be the meer Name of the Service without the Thing; like a painted Fire, that never warms or enlivens any one.

This must be said of the Greatness, and Power of God's own Ordinances and Institutions to Spiritual Ends, which are prescribed in this Commandment. But then we must not think to set up things of our own Devising,
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and ascribe Power to them, which no Mortal is able to give; as many foolish People do to Charms, and others to certain Relicks of the Saints, and Crossings, and Holy Water; which is for Men to go a *Whoring after their own Imaginations*, Psal. 106. 39. *Levit. 10. 1. 1 Kings 12. 33.* Nor is any thing to be done in God's Worship, which is contrary to any Rule of Worship that he hath given; for that would be to provoke and not to Worship him. But particular Circumstances, Modes and Forms, or signs of expressing our Worship, which are subordinate to the general Rules of Worship, and are only Specialities under them, and do not contradict any Divine Prescription, but are left undetermin'd by God, must needs, in their own Nature, be free and indifferent; and either one or other may be used as humane Prudence shall direct; and therefore may be determined, either by private Persons for themselves, or by Societies, or Officers, to whom the determination of such things shall be committed, according to the Usages and Customs of the Churches, for publick Orders sake, *1 Cor. 11. 4, 5, 6. and 14. 40. Rom. 14. 19.*

Q. How doth God enforce or back this Commandment, to engage us the more to the Observation thereof?

A. Because He only is our Lord God, who will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praise to Graven Images, Isa. 42. 8. He is our Sovereign and our King, who hath a Propriety in us, and a just Rule over us, because he gave us our very Beings, and all the Powers that we are

are endued with, and doth still sustain and nourish us. Therefore we must *Worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker; because he is our God, and we are the People of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his Hand, Psal. 95. 6, 7. He is thy Lord and worship thou him, Psal. 45. 11. For thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, Matth. 4. 10.*

And then moreover, because he is a *Jealous God*, and will suffer none to cope it with him in his Worship; having a Zeal for his own Glory, and to keep his Worship pure and intire to himself; which is most reasonable in the very Nature of the thing, because he is God alone, *Exod. 34. 14. Isa. 48. 11, 12.*

And he counts all the Breakers of this Commandment to be such as *bate him*. And therefore he will visit this Iniquity upon them most severely, so as that the Visitation shall reach even to their Posterity, for several Generations; who shall bear the Fruit of their Father's Sin. As we see, in God's rending ten Tribes from *Rehoboam*, for the Sin of *Solomon*, *1 Kings 11. 11-35.* And have an Instance of the like Visitation in *Jeroboam's House*, *1 Kings 13. 32. and 15. 29, 30.* In *Basha's*, *1 Kings 16. 3. 12.* In *Ahab's*, *2 Kings 10. 11. Lament. 5. 7.* Nor is this any ways unreasonable for the deterring of Men from Sin; that the great Sovereign of the World, and Lord of all, should so order things in the Course of his Providence, that upon the occasion of the Father's Sin, their Posterity should suffer many Losses and Evils; that so not only out of respect to God's Authority over them, and Love to themselves, but also to their
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Posterity, which are as part of themselves, they should take care to abstain from Sin, and especially from this Sin of Idolatry, which God hath thought fit therefore to set a particular mark of his Displeasure upon, and of his special Indignation against, *2 Kings* 22. 17. and 24. 3. *Hosea* 2. 4. And yet that we find to be done then especially, when they follow the Steps of their wicked Parents, and justify their Parents Sin by Imitation; so that after a sort their Parents Sin becomes theirs also, or else they otherwise live wickedly, and so fill up the measure of their Fathers, as we see in the forementioned Instances. Whereas if they renounce the Iniquities of their Fathers, disallow them, and are grieved for them; and in case the Sin hath been committed against Man, if they make satisfaction for the Wrong done, or for any visible and known Injustice committed by them, they may then hope or expect to remove or prevent the Evil, which would otherwise fall upon them, *Ezek.* 18. 2, 3, 4-14, &c.

And then here is another Encouragement added by God to the keepers of this Commandment, and his other Commandments out of a sincere Love and Respect to him, that he will bless not only them, but their Posterity also for many Generations; that is, provided that their Posterity do not revolt, and fall into Sin, and thereby provoke God at length to leave them, *Psal.* 103. 17, 18.

Q. Which

Q. Which is the Third Commandment?

A. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain.

Q. What is the scope and design of this Commandment?

A. Farther to preserve and keep up the Honour of Almighty God in the World, by preserving a due Reverence and Esteem, and a right use of all those things, that any way relate to him.

Q. What is here meant then by the Name of God?

A. The Name of any thing is that, whereby it is set forth, or made known to us what it is; and is either for Distinction or Dignity. And so the Name of God is all that, whereby God makes himself known to us, to distinguish himself from all other things, and to express and set forth his Glory. As, his Titles and Names properly so called, which in the Original are many, but are in our English Tongue generally express'd by two, viz. of Lord and God, and sometimes Jehovab or Jah; or, I am that I am. Such also are his Attributes, which shew us what he is. As when God proclaimed his Name before Moses, Exod. 34. 6. The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, &c. And thus also his Word may be said to be a great part of his Name; because he doth

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by that more fully make himself known to us ; yea, and is said to have magnify'd his Word above all his Name, Psal. 138. 1, 2. And so his Ordinances and Institutions make God known to us, and by those, his Name is great among the Gentiles, Mal. 3. 11. So do his Works ; by which the Invisible things of God are seen, Rom. 1. 20. And thus, The Heavens declare the Glory of God, Psal. 19. 1. Thus because of his great and marvellous Works, as also because of his Attributes, (forasmuch as he is the Lord God Almighty, and his Ways just and true) it is said, Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name ? Revelat. 15. 4.

Q. What is meant by the taking this Name in vain ?

A. It is safest, and of most use to us, to understand it in the greatest Latitude, without any critical restraint. And to the taking of it up, signifieth the use of it any way by us ; the use of his Titles, Attributes, Ordinances, Word or Works. And we may be said to take them, or use them in vain ; when we use them rashly or lightly, without attention and care, as if they were things of small worth, or very little moment ; and when we do it to no good purpose or end ; that is, whenever we don't do it with that Reverence, as is suitable to so great a Majesty, and so as doth not express that respect and Honour, that we owe to him, and to all that belongs to him.

Q. What

Q. What is required then in this Commandment?

A. To avoid all Irreverent mentioning of Gods Name, Titles, or Attributes; and all irreverent use of his Ordinances, Word or Works; whereby God's Glory should be any ways impair'd in the World, or Men should be induced to think lightly of him, or to carry it regardlessly towards him. And on the contrary, **to honour His Holy Name**, and especially **His word**; whereby he is pleased in a more eminent manner to make himself known to us; by a serious and devout use thereof, and of all those Ordinances of Divine Worship, that are instituted and appointed therein.

Q. What are those Instances of the Profane and Irreverent use of God's Name, which therefore ought to be avoided by us?

A. One of the most notorious Instances thereof, is that of Perjury, or false Swearing; which is committed, either by a positive asserting what we know is untrue, or what is uncertain, unknown, or doubtful; or by promising, what we have no intent to perform, or do not perform, when it is lawful for us, and in our power to do it. Which, considering the Nature of an Oath, is so flagrant a Crime, that it is justly to be admired, how any one, through any Temptation whatsoever can be induc'd deliberately to commit it; or to be careless about it. An Oath is a Religious Act, wherein there is a solemn Invocation of, or an Appeal made to God, as a Witness to the Truth of what we say,

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declare, or promise. And which tacitly at least contains in it an Imprecation of his Vengeance upon us, if we swear falsely, *1 Kings* 2. 23. and 19. 2. And therefore an *Oath* and a *Curse* are joyn'd together, as supposing one to be implied in the other, *Nehem.* 10. 30. and *5.* 12, 13. So that when a Man makes such an Appeal to God, and sweareth falsely, it is an Argument, either of his downright Atheism, or denial of God, or of his Unbelief of his Omniscience to know or observe his Fact, or of his Almighty Power to avenge himself, or of his contempt of such Power; or else it argueth, that he thinks God is such a one as himself, and hath as little regard to truth, as he himself hath, and will be as little concern'd to judge or punish him for the breach or violation thereof, and for the Affront that he puts upon him thereby, or by this his appeal to him. All which are Crimes of the most atrocious Nature, and must needs provoke the utmost Indignation of Almighty God against such Contemners of him.

Besides all which, this practice of Perjury destroyeth all Trust among Men, and depriveth Mankind of the greatest Security for the making good their most solemn Contracts and Promises, which if an Oath will not preserve, nothing can be supposed sacred or strong enough to do it; and likewise invalidates the greatest Instrument of putting an end to all Controversies and Disputes about Facts done, *Heb.* 6. 16. And therefore tends to the ruining of all Alliances, and the dissolving of all Society; and so is no less pernicious to the welfare of the World, than it is in the highest manner affronting

ing to Almighty God himself. And therefore being so very high a Crime, God hath been pleased, as well out of respect to our Good, as to his own Honour, to forbid and threaten it most severely, and often to execute his fierce Wrath and Judgment upon the committers thereof, Levit. 19. 12. *Ye shall not swear by my Name falsely; neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy God,* Zech. 5. 3, 4. *There is a Curse going forth, that shall enter into the House of him that sweareth falsely by my Name; and it shall remain in the midst of his House, and shall consume it with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof,* Mal. 3. 5. For God will be a swift Witness against false swearers. It being the Character only of some of the worst of Sinners, of meer Children of Belial, Prov. 19. 28. 1 Kings 21. 13. Exod. 23. 1. And therefore God hath declared his hatred against such, and shewed his abhorrence of them, Prov. 6. 19. and 19. 5, 9. and 21. 28. Zech. 8. 17. Men must not be false Witnesses for God himself, and much less to do their Neighbour either good or hurt, 1 Cor. 15. 15. 'Tis the Character of good Men to make good their Oaths, tho' it be to their own hurt, Psal. 24. 4. Prov. 14. 5.

Q. What other Instance is there of the profane abuse of God's Name?

A. That of light, rash and common Swearing, when there is no just or necessary occasion for it, to justify the solemnity of such an Act, but a matter may be sufficiently determined without it. When it is used in common Conversation about every impertinent Matter, only to swell or plump up a Discourse, or to express a bluster-

ing Passion, to make a Speech look big and great ; which is a downright perverting the Nature and End of an Oath, which is a Religious Act, and therefore as all other Acts of Religion, ought to be performed, not triflingly or wantonly, or in slightness or mockery, but with just attention, seriousness and gravity, when need doth so require, *Deut. 10. 20. Isa. 45. 23. Psal. 63. 11.*

To make the least of it, it is a slighting of God, to hale his great and sacred Name, upon all occasions, into our idle Talk, and impertinent Prattle, or to serve our Folly or Passion. Nor will it avail for Men to say, they intend no such thing, when though there may not be any such formal intention, it is so in the nature of the thing, and evidently proceeds from carelessness, or wantonness, and levity of Mind, or from a meer fantastick humour and foppishness, or from rage and choler.

And it is plainly that which carrieth along with it, or hath attending upon it a great deal of Mischief, and very bad Consequences. For it often is apt to engage the rash and heedless Swearer in doing of those things, which he himself will wish he had not been engaged in, or else he must make void his Vows and Promises, *Matth. 14. 9. 1 Sam. 25. 22.* And so through their Levity, or inconsiderate Passion, they are apt to incur the Guilt of Perjury too, and so to make their Sin above measure heinous. And this common and frequent use of Oaths, even in ordinary Commerce, is plainly apt to render Oaths cheap and vile, and so lesseneth their Reverence, and consequently their Esteem,
and

and their binding Power among Men ; so that this comes to be a Breach upon the Being and welfare of Society too, so far as it prevaieth, and maketh the fastest tie of Conscience in all Leagues and Engagements to be of no force. And thereby it doth a great deal of harm to the World. And yet that which addeth very much to the criminalness of this Practice is, that there is no kind of advantage that accrueeth to them thereby ; it carrieth no considerable Temptation with it, it gratifieth no sense, nor affects a Man with any just Pleasure, but what is meerly arising from the meer corruption of Spirit.

But our Saviour himself hath fully determined this Matter, and forbidden it in all our common Communication, *Matth. 5. 34, 35, &c.* I say unto you, swear not at all ; but let your Communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay. As he doth also that other practice of Swearing by Creatures ; as now by the Body, Blood, Death, or Wounds of Christ ; which is either the same by Interpretation, with swearing by God himself, and so hath the same Profaneness in it, *Matth. 23. 21, 22.* or else is an Idolatrous Act, and so will be interpreted, *Dan. 6. 13. Jer. 5. 7.* or else it is altogether insignificant Gibberish, without sense or meaning. The like Prohibition we have from the Apostle, *James 5. 12.*

To this profane Practice of common Swearing may also be reduc'd that of Interlarding all Discourse with the Name of God, Lord, and Sweet Jesus, and the like ; and making the most solemn Exclamations of, O Lord ! O God ! and making Apostrophe's to them, in the most empty and

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trivial Business, which tho' it do not come up to the daringness of an Oath, yet is an Irreverence, and justly deserveth a Censure.

Q. May we at no time take up the Name of God into our Mouths by Swearing?

A. Yes: There is nothing else, that will in many Cases of Controversie and Dispute give full and sufficient satisfaction to Mankind; there being nothing less than this, that they can sit down satisfied with. And in Matters of considerable weight and moment, they cannot rest contented, till they have the utmost assurance that can be had, of the veracity and fidelity of those they are engaged with; which in the general Sense of Mankind, it is this alone can give them. But this, though it be not an infallible Decision of Doubts and Controversies, yet is the best that can be had; and therefore hath been concluded upon as the only peremptory and final Decision, there being nothing more or beyond this, that can be done. And therefore in this Men have generally concluded to acquiesce. For as the Apostle saith, *An Oath for confirmation, is to them an end of all strife*, Heb. 6. 16. Where the Apostle speaks of this Practice without any manner of Censure, as the general Practice of Mankind, in all such doubtful and disputable Cases. And also brings in God himself in condescension to our Weakness, as complying with the same Custom, and so giving countenance to its *confirming his Promise with an Oath*, Verse 13.

And we find in all Ages it hath been practised by the best of Men, and they have not thought any thing less to have been sufficient Security without it ; when in matters of great Concernment they have been dealing with one another, *Gen.* 24. 3. and 47. 31. *1 Sam.* 20. 17. *2 Sam.* 21. 7. *Gen.* 21. 24. and 31. 53. And we find the Apostle himself engaging an Oath again and again, upon great and weighty Occasions, *Rom.* 1. 9. *2 Cor.* 1. 18, 23. *Gal.* 1. 20. *Phil.* 1. 8. *1 Thess.* 2. 5. And we find our Saviour himself answering upon Oath before the High Priest, when he adjur'd him to it according to the *Jewish* Custom, when they required any to answer upon Oath, *Matth.* 26. 63. *comp. with Lev.* 5. 1. *Mark* 14. 61. our Saviour's Prohibition, *Mat.* 5. 33, 34. respecting only needless Oaths in common Conversation, or *Communication* among Men. And when Men swear aright, in cases of Moment that stood in need of it, it is plainly a doing Honour to God, by owning his Omniscience or Knowledge of the most secret things that are hid from Men ; and of his holiness and love to Truth, and of his Power to avenge upon Men all prevarication and falseness in Swearing. And therefore this hath been lookt upon as an act of religious Worship, and required to be done in the name of God only, and of no other, because it implyeth the ascribing of Divine Perfections to any such thing which Men swear by, which would be Idolatry, *Deut.* 6. 13. 14. *Josh.* 27. 3.

But that we may honour God's Name in Swearing, we must see *Jer.* 4. 2. that it be done in Truth, and Sincerity ; that God's Name be not

not taken to hide an Equivocation, to cloak a Deceit, or to confirm a Lie, which is that horrible Sin of Perjury mention'd before. *In Judgment*, and therefore with advisedness and deliberation, with stayedness and sobriety; for good Causes and Ends, not upon trivial and slight Grounds; not in Rage, or Passion, or Lightness, which is the fault of common Swearing. *In Righteousness*, or to further Right, and to promote Justice and Equity among Men, and not to hinder or pervert it; which is a Complicated Wickedness, a breach of both Tables together, being made up of Perjury, Lying, and unjust Dealing.

Q. What other way of prophaning God's Name in Speech or Discourse is there?

A. When Men use their Tongues, which should be employed in setting forth God's Glory, to quite other Purposes; to disseminate false Opinions, to induce Men to Error, or to disparage any Divine Truth, especially when it is about God, his Being, Attributes or Providence, or the word of his Grace, which giveth us the Knowledge of his Will, which tends to raze the Foundations of all Moral Goodness. When Men rashly embrace and espouse Opinions and Notions about Divine things, without mature and frequent Consideration, and then with the same Rashness and Precipitancy, and with all their Vigour perswade others to embrace the same; which afterwards they find they had little reason for. When they use their Tongues to Dispute against things of the highest Consequence, only for Disputes sake; or to show their Parts
and

and Wit, before Persons that are not able to judge of Difficulties, thereby to unsettle the Faith of others, or to procure them much trouble and disquiet, which they may not wear off for a great while after; or else they do all this out of an itch of vain Curiosity, which when the Consequences of it may be very bad, is a most unaccountable and dangerous Evil. As if a Man should go about to despoil his Neighbour of his Faith, and Comfort, and Peace, and to murder his Soul, and then to say, Am not I in Jest? *1 Tim. 1. 5, 6, 7.* When Men use their Speech to disparage Holiness or Religion, especially in those parts of it that are the most deep and vital; and to deride and mock at serious Godliness, and godly Persons for their Prayers and Strictness; or because they abstain from the Liberties that others take; and when they do all they can only to encourage a vain Profession of Religion without Life and Power; when they deride Sanctification, and nick-name Virtue and Goodness to make it odious; and set out Vice and Wickedness in a false Light, or gaudy Colours, to make it more taking to the Eyes of unwary Fools, *Jude 15.* When they speak carelessly and irreverently of Divine things only to expose them to Contempt; or have the word of God in disdain, and make a mock at the Use of it in Preaching and Exhortation, tho' that is the Authority that we must always depend upon, *Jer. 23. 33.* When Men use the Scripture only for curious and unprofitable Questions, and vain Janglings and Disputes, which Profit nothing to the use of Edifying, *1 Tim. 6. 4. 2. Tim. 2. 16. 1 Tim. 1. 4, 5.* or take the mangled Sentences,

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Sentences, and disjointed Expressions thereof, thereby as they think, to make a Ludicrous Story Ornamental; and quibble with the Sacred Phrases, and make ridiculous Allusions thereunto, and all to turn the Bible into a Jest, and to make Divinity a meer Droll, *Isa.* 28. 22.

Q. What is it to Honour God's Name, and especially his word?

A. It is to employ our Tongues in his Praises, and in setting forth the excellency of his Majesty, and his high and glorious Perfections; and whenever we speak of him, or of any thing that belongs to him, to do it with an awful Respect, and with a religious Reverence, *Psal.* 57. 7, 8, 9. and 34. 1. and 50. 23. and 29. 1, 2. And for our *Honouring of God's Word*, we ought always to have an high Esteem and Reverence thereof, as being the Word of God, and not of Man; and maintain and defend it against all the suggestions and oppositions of Atheists, Deists and Hereticks, *1 Pet.* 1. 19, 20, 21. *2 Tim.* 3. 16, 17. *Heb.* 1. 1. Ministers must found their Doctrines and Instructions upon it; build their Exhortations, Reproofs and Directions upon its Testimony and Authority, and infinitely prefer it before all their own Reasonings, before the Testimonies or Reasonings of Poets, Philosophers, Fathers, Councils, or any Doctors whatsoever; tho' these also may be made use of in their places, and upon certain Occasions, to show a Correspondence between them, *Eph.* 2. 20. *Luke* 24. 27, 44. and 16. 29. *2 Tim.* 4. 2. *Ezek.* 13. 2, 3. We must all make it the Rule of our Faith and Manners, try the Spirits, resolve

solve all Cases, and decide all Controversies principally by it, *Is.* 8. 20. *Gal.* 1. 8. *Luke* 10. 26. *Jo* 20. 30. 1 *Jo*. 4. 1. We must read, search, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, *Jo*. 5. 39, 46. 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. *Acts* 17. 11. *Deut.* 17. 18, 19. *Col.* 3. 16. *Prov.* 4. 13. and 7. 1, 2. *Isa.* 34. 16. We must make use of it as our Armour against all Temptations, and against all Assaults of the Devil, *Mat.* 4. 4, 7, 10. *Ephes.* 6. 15, 16, 17. We must hide it in our Hearts, lay it up as our greatest Treasure, fetch our Comforts from it, and build our Hopes upon it, *Rom.* 15. 4. *Psal.* 119. 24, 97. We must tremble at the Threatnings, and labour to get out of the way of them, *Isa.* 66. 2. 2. *Kin.* 22. 19. We must diligently keep the Commandments, govern our selves, and order our whole Conversation by the rule thereof, *Psal.* 119. 9, 105, 130. *Psal.* 19. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Gal.* 6. 16. *Jam.* 1. 21, 22, 23, 24. *Jo*. 13. 17. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3. *Echl.* 12. 13. *Deut.* 5. 1. *Matth.* 7. 26.

Q. How may we honour God's Name in his Ordinances?

A. When we respect not only the matter, but the manner of our Performances, wherein so much of the Form and Essence of Duty doth consist, *Lev.* 10. 3. 1 *Chr.* 15. 13. When we come with sincerity of Intention, and direct what we do to right and proper ends, to worship God, that he may be Glorified thereby, and our Souls edified in that, which is good; and not to be seen of Men to get Applause, or to serve our own Vanity and Lusts, *Matth.* 6. 5, 16. 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *Jam.* 4. 3. *John* 9. 31. *Isa.* 58. 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 *King.* 21. 9. *Jam.* 4. 5. *Isa.* 66. 3. When we come with reverence

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reverence of Heart suitable to those holy acts of Religion that we are engaged in, *Heb.* 12. 28. *Psal.* 89. 7. *Lev.* 19. 30. 1 *Cbr.* 16. 25. When we watch against unaptness, and wandring of Spirit in the exercises of Religion, and against all Sleepiness and Dulness, and labour to do all we do, with life and fervency, *Psal.* 57. 7. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Mat.* 26. 40, 43. When we drive things home upon our selves, and labour to attain the end and fruit of all Ordinances, the amendment and reformation of our selves; without which, all besides is vain, and unprofitable, and unacceptable to God, *Isa.* 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *Ezek.* 33. 30, 31.

Thus we honour God in Prayer, when, as we delight in approaching to God, so we come into his Presence with humbleness of Mind, with an awful and holy reverence, suitable to so great a Majesty that we come before, *Jam.* 4. 8, 10. We dont only babble out, or speak words with our Mouths, when at the same time our Hearts are far from him, or at the end of the Earth: But when our Hearts draw nigh to him, and we pour out our Souls before him, *Eccl.* 5. 1, 2. *Matth.* 15. 8. *Psal.* 21. 1. and 42. 4. and 52. 8. *Hos.* 7. 14. When we speak with sensibility of what we are about, and accordingly with fervency, life and seriousness. *Jam.* 5. 16. *Col.* 4. 12. *Matth.* 7. 7, 8. When we come with Faith, *Jam.* 1. 16. *Psal.* 119. 81. *Heb.* 10. 12. *Isa.* 45. 19. In Charity, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *Jam.* 5. 16. with a pure disposition of Spirit, without guilt or guile, *Heb.* 10. 22. 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *Psal.* 66. 18. *John.* 9. 31. *Isa.* 59. 1, 2. 1 *John* 3. 21. *Prov.* 21. 27. *Isa.* 1. 15. *Ezek.* 14. 3. 1 *Pet.* 3. 12. We must

must consider therefore what a Majesty we are before, who knoweth our Frame, and cannot be deceived, and will not be mock'd with vain, slight, and hypocritical Performances, *Matth. 6. 7. and 23. 14.*

And thus in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we honour God's Name when we never suffer our selves thro' Idleness, Insensibility, causeless Prejudices, or feigned Excuses to neglect it. And when we do not rush upon it, but devoutly and carefully prepare for so holy a Service; and labour to get our selves beforehand affected with suitable Dispositions to the Nature, Design, and End thereof. When we humble our selves, and stir up Repentance for our former Sins before we come; and to come with true penitent Hearts, and a stedfast Purpose to lead a new Life. And so also with a sound and lively Faith in Christ Jesus, and a belief of his Gospel and Promises, thereby to feed upon the same; and with Hearts much affected with the love of Christ, in dying for our Sins, and with a thankful remembrance of the same; and endeavour to make suitable returns of Love to him, and are full of Praise; and sincerely renew our Covenant with him, and are resolv'd in our Obedience through his Grace, to serve him evermore with Faithfulness, and Zeal, and Constancy. And when we come with a sincere Charity and good will to Men, and Forgiveness even to Enemies. When we examine our selves, and excite these Graces before we come; exert and act them in the time of receiving; and live up to all afterwards.

Q. How

Q. How are we to Honour God's Name in his Works?

A. By having high and admiring Thoughts thereof, and of his Wisdom, Power and Goodness revealed therein; and by praising him accordingly for the same. As Psal. 104. 24. O Lord, how wonderful are thy Works? In Wisdom hast thou made them all, Job 5. 9. He doth great things; and unsearchable, marvellous things, and without number, Job 37. 16. Dost thou know the wondrous Works of him, who is perfect in Knowledge? Job 26. 14. Lo, these are part of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of them? All which we have a fuller account of, Job 36, 37, 38, and 39. And Psal. 104. and 147. So that we may say, as Psal. 92. 5. O Lord, how great are thy Works? And thy Thoughts are very deep. But Eccles. 3. 11. A Man cannot find out the Work that God maketh, from the beginning to the end. Psal. 47. 2. For the Lord most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the Earth, Psal. 66. 3. How terrible art thou in thy Works? Nehem. 9. 6. For thou, even thou art Lord alone; thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, the Seas and all that therein is; and thou preservest them all, and the Host of Heaven worshipeth thee. The Frame of the Heavens, and of the Heavenly Bodies, and their Situation and Motion is wonderful in the Eyes of all, and even of them, that have most considered the same. And as to the Earth here, there are innumerable Discoveries of the Divine Wisdom, and Power and Goodness, which are very resplendent therein; so that there is not one single Creature, but is an evidence thereof;

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of; from the least Gnat or smallest Insect, to the greatest Elephant, or *Bebemoth*, though we cannot now make a perfect Judgment of the original beauty of all things, by what we now see; because of that alteration that was brought upon it by the Deluge, for Man's Sin. Nor can we now judge what would have been, or would be, in the Course of Divine Providence, if Man had still continued in his innocent State, and favour of his Creator. And therefore neither is that roughness or difficulty, which sometimes seems to be in Divine Providence, at all to be censured by us; it being necessary, that it should be so, for the Correction of Sinners, for the Vindication of God's Laws and Government, and to hide Pride from Men.

Q. What is the Punishment threatned to them, that take God's Name in vain?

A. He will not hold them guiltless; that is, but he will most certainly and severely punish them, especially for those most crying and flagrant Sins, that are committed against this Commandment; and that many times in this World, by executing his special Judgments upon them, but in a more dreadful manner in the next, except they repent, 1 Sam. 1. 30. For they that Honour me, I will Honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. For he that sweareth, shall be cut off, Zech. 5. 3. But, seeing he despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant, he shall not escape; but I will recompence it upon his own Head, Ezek. 17, 18, 19. And, If Men will not fear this glorious and fearful Name, the Lord thy God, He will make their Plagues wonderful, Dan. 28. 58, 59. And they

that Curse, God will make their own Tongues to fall upon themselves, Psal 64. 8. And, whosoever curseth his God, shall bear his Sin, Levit. 24. 15. For Men must give an account for every idle Word, Jude 15. When God will execute Judgment upon Sinners, for all their hard Speeches, which they have spoken against him, Mal. 3. 5. when he will be a swift Witness against them.

Q. What is the Fourth Commandment?

A. Remember that thou keep Holy the Sabbath Day. Six Days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do. But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work; thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man Servant, nor thy Maid Servant, nor thy Cattle, nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates. For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the Seventh Day; Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and Hallowed it.

Q. What is the End and Design of this Commandment?

A. It is to fix and settle a certain time, within such a compass and revolution of Days, for the solemn Exercise of the Worship of God, and for the keeping up a grateful remembrance of his Benefits, which otherwise thro' Man's Negligence and Corruption, would be apt to be forgot,
that

that by this means the Honour and Glory of God may be still the better maintain'd and preserved. For as it is highly reasonable and equal in the very nature of the thing, that seeing God is so exceeding Glorious and Excellent in himself, and we have our Beings from him, and are infinitely indebted to him for innumerable Blessings which he hath conferr'd upon us, that there should be ever a grateful acknowledgment hereof, and that this should be own'd and express'd by us in Acts of Adoration and Worship to him. So because of the weakness of our Faculties in this State, we are not always able to be employ'd in a full stretch in the performance thereof, it is fit, that there should be some time appointed for it, wherein it should be done in a more solemn manner than the other. And because of the multitude of Cumbrances and Works here, which relate to this imperfect Bodily State, and are necessary thereunto, we are so engaged and employed about those things, that we must needs be expos'd to many Distractions and Diversions, by which our Minds are apt to be turned away from this reasonable Service; and we now thro' our own Corruption, are inclined to the neglect thereof; therefore that it might not be still put off or deferr'd too long, it is fit that some particular Time should be determined and fix'd for it; and that it should not be left to us to determine it our selves. This we have therefore done for us in this Commandment.

Q. What is the Sum then of that; which is required in this Commandment?

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A. It is to engage us to remember, that we be sure to keep one Day in *Seven*, in the weekly Course and Revolution of Days, as a Day of Rest (for so the Word *Sabbath* signifieth) from Bodily Labour; and to consecrate the same to Holy Uses, for the Exercise of God's Worship, and the continual preserving and maintaining the same; to recognize his Greatness and his Goodness to us, and our constant dependance upon him; and to imploy our selves in such Divine Services, as may together tend to our own present Spiritual, and to the promoting of our eternal Welfare. And one Day in *Seven* being thought by God a convenient proportion of time for that end and purpose, it is hereby so determined and ordered by him. Not but that it is likewise required of us, that we *serve God truly all the Days of our Lives.*

Q. Was Mankind always under an Obligation to observe such a Seventh part, or proportion of time, for God's special Service? And doth the same Obligation still lie upon all?

A. Yes: We have God's Institution and Appointment thereof, presently after the Creation, whilst Man was in his innocent State, Gen. 2. 2. For God rested the Seventh Day from his Work, and God then blessed the Seventh Day and sanctified it. By which Institution a Seventh Day after six Days of Labour was ordered to be reserved and set apart for an Holy Rest, according to the present Intent of this Fourth Commandment, in which we have the same form of Expression, of *keeping holy the Sabbath Day.* This is part of the relation of those things that were done within the compass
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of the first Seven Days, before *Moses* comes to recapitulate the whole in the Verses following; *These are the Generations of the Heavens and the Earth, when they were created.* Nor is there the least ground to suppose it to be spoken, only by way of Anticipation, as the reason of God's Appointment hereof afterwards at the giving of the Law on *Mount Sinai*, which there is here no kind of reference to. But we are rather to suppose that this *Fourth Commandment* here was given and renewed with reference to that.

And it is reasonable to believe, that such a day of holy Rest was observed by the holy Patriarchs before *Moses's* time, by virtue of that first Institution thereof. And therefore *Noah* having in a solemn manner sought God on that solemn Day, as it is likely that Good Men would do, he expected a particular Blessing from it, and therefore thrice sent out the Dove and the Raven on the Seventh Day, *Gen. 8. 10-12.* And it seems to have been founded upon this Institution, that there was a periodical computation of Weeks, from the beginning, *Gen. 29. 27. and 50. 10. Eccles. 22. 12. Exod. 7. 25.* And it is likely, that the Children of *Israel* observed such a Day even in *Egypt*, till the Tyranny of *Pharaoh* grew hot upon them, obliging them to bring the Tale of Bricks every Day, without excepting the Sabbath, when *Moses*, it is likely, address'd to him, that on that Day they might go to Worship in the Wilderness, *Exod. 5. 3, 4, 5.*

And it is plain from *Exod. 16. 23.* that a Sabbath was observed by the *Israelites*, before this Law was given on *Mount Sinai*. And it is spoken of as a thing well known, and that had been

customary, though perhaps not on the same Day, that was afterwards appointed, *Verse 23.* And therefore there was to be no *Manna* got here on that Day, but there was to be enough gathered and prepared on the sixth Day for two Days, *Verse 5.* Tho' it is probable in that Age of the declining of Religion in the World, through the corruption of Men, which made them grudge at the sparing of so much time from their Labours, there was not made that reckoning of it, which there should have been; nor then by the *Jews* themselves, having been accustomed so much to the neglect thereof, in their hard Bondage, till they were at that time especially put in mind thereof again, in the 16th Chapter of *Exodus.* And those Words, *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day,* in this Fourth Commandment, import, that it was not a new Law that was then given, but an old Institution, tho' of late too much difused or slighted; and therefore are here prefixt as a strict Caveat against Carelessness and Forgetfulness of it for the time to come. And the Apostle, *Heb. 4. 3, 4.* discoursing of those Words of the Psalmist, *Psal. 95. To whom I swear in my Wrath, that they shall not enter into my Rest,* argueth, that it could not be meant of the Rest of the Sabbath, because from the beginning of the World Men entred into that Rest; and *Joshua* had given them Rest before in the Land of *Canaan*; therefore it must be meant of a third Rest in Heaven. So the Apostle supposeth a Sabbath always observed from the beginning of the World. And so it hath been observed from the Heathen Authors, that the seventh Day was look'd upon as a solemn Day or Festival amongst them.

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From all which it will follow, that all Mankind ever was, and is still obliged to keep a seventh part or proportion of time holy to God, by vertue of that first Institution; and by vertue of the Fourth Commandment; which, tho' as given to the People of the *Jews*, did only oblige that People, yet as it was a Transcript of that Law, and a Reinforcement of it, doth oblige all Mankind likewise. And there being the same common reason, as ever, for it, to keep up the Solemn Worship of God in the World, which would be lost without the observing of such a Day; and there being the same common Obligation, to keep such a Day still in Memory of the Creation, that we may also declare our selves thereby to be the Worshipers of that God, that made Heaven and Earth; and there being the like Equity, and need for the same Proportion of time now as ever. And therefore all that are Lovers of God and Religion in sincerity, should do all they can to encourage and maintain the due observation of the Sabbath, to the Honour of God, and the promoting of the good of Souls, in the preserving and keeping up God's Worship and Religion, by means thereof, in the World.

Q. But was there ever any particular Day of the Seven stated and appointed by God, either at the first, or to the Jews, to be this Day of Holy Rest?

A. Considering the Globular form of the Earth, and the different beginning of the Day in the several Parts of it, whensoever the same be supposed to commence, whether at Sun-rising or Sun-setting, or at Noon or Midnight; it is impossible that one and the same Day could uni-

versally be observed all the World over. For the Sun must rise in *Assyria*, where Man is supposed first to have been created, half a Natural Day, before it would do so in some Parts of *America*. And whosoever should take a Voyage round the World, from East to West, or from West to East, would by that time he returns to the Point or Place from whence he set out, either gain or lose a Day ; so that it would not be the same Day to him at his return, as it was at first setting out, and as it would be to the Inhabitants still there remaining. And therefore neither the first Institution, nor the Fourth Commandment in *Exod. 20.* as obliging all Mankind, can be supposed to oblige all to the observance of the same particular Day ; because that would be to oblige to an impossibility. And it seems only at first, that God blessed the Seventh Day, the Day of Rest after six Days Labour, in remembrance of the Work of Creation, and of God's own resting on the Seventh Day, when he had finish'd his Work. And at the delivery of the Law again, *Exod. 20.* so it is express'd. *Six Days shalt thou labour. &c. but the Seventh is the Sabbath, &c.* that is, after the six of Labour ; in conformity to God's resting on the Seventh, after his six of Work ; but which Day of the Seven it should be, or whether it should be the very Seventh on which God himself rested, is not determined ; but the Seventh of God's Rest, is only made an Argument, or proposed as an Exemplar, for their resting likewise on the Seventh after their six of Labour. Tho' it is probable, that our first Parents, and so their Off-spring, in that part of the World, computing their Days from the first Creation, did
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begin and hold on to observe the same Seventh Day in the tale of the Days, for their Rest, which had been the Day of God's Rest, as appear'd to them in that part of the Earth. Not that this did oblige all Mankind, or could do so soon after in all parts of the Earth, because the same Day could not be in all Parts.

But at the renewing of the Law to the Children of *Israel*, after the coming out of *Egypt*, there was a particular Day fix'd and stated to that People, which they were bound to observe; which was the Day, in which they came out of *Egypt*, and past the Red Sea; as the reason for it is given at the Repetition of the Law, *Deut. 5. 15.* And which was the Seventh after their six Days of gathering Manna, *Exod. 16.* By which they were obliged to worship God also, for a particular reason concerning themselves, on that particular Day, under the particular Character of his being their Deliverer and Saviour out of the *Egyptian* Bondage on that Day; which, it seems, was on that Day, which we now call *Saturday*, and was ever after kept as their Sabbath, in Memory of their beginning on that Day to rest from their Bondage; though a Sabbath, in general, was required to be observed in Memory of the Creation; but their Deliverance withal being a particular Reason to them, the particular Day was fixed to that particular time.

Q. *Are we obliged to observe the same Seventh Day for a Sabbath, as the Jews were, or another?*

A. We are obliged to observe a Sabbath, or a seventh part of Time for an Holy Rest, as the *Jews* were, by vertue of the first Institution, and the

the reinforcement of it in *Exod.* 20. and from the reason and equity and design of the Institution, so far as it is in common to us and them. But that more particular reason, for which God obliged the *Jews* to observe that Seventh Day, which he prescribed to them, which was their Redemption and Deliverance out of *Egypt* on that Day, *Deut.* 5. Not concerning other Nations; the Commandment, which was founded upon that particular reason, doth not concern other Nations or People neither.

But yet all Nations being obliged to keep a Sabbath, as their Redemption and Deliverance out of *Egypt* was a reason to them by God's Appointment, for the keeping of that Seventh Day, which they did; so their Redemption out of *Egypt* being a Type of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, which is infinitely greater than that, and which doth concern all Nations; therefore as they were obliged to observe that Seventh Day in Memory of their Redemption, so the same reason and equity holds to lay an Obligation now upon all Mankind, to observe the Day, in which our Redemption was brought to such a completion by Christ's rising from the Dead, which was on the first Day of the *Jewish* Week. In which, as being one Day in seven, or in the Weekly Revolution of Days, we keep up the Memory of the Creation, and observe a Seventh Day after six of Labour, in Conformity to God's Rest on the Seventh Day, after his six Days Work; so on this first Day of that, which was the *Jewish* Week, we keep up the Memory of our Redemption by Christ, rising from the Dead on that Day, by which that Day was particularly sanctify'd to us.

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And it is probable, that this Day, on which our Saviour rose, and is now observed by us as the Christian Sabbath, was also the very Seventh Day, according to the computation of that part of the World, after the Creation; and that that Day, which the *Jews* were obliged to keep for their Sabbath, was not so. For it is probable, that the Patriarchs did keep the same Horizontal Day, as near as they could, which was the Seventh, in order, after the Creation, in and about *Assyria*, where they then lived, and made that the Day of their Rest; so that God's Rest and theirs might be on the same Day, tho' it could not be so all the World over. Which Day, after the prevailing of Idolatry, and the Worship of the Sun as the chief God in that part of the World; as it was before imployed in the Worship of the true God, so in that degeneracy of Mankind, was then dedicated to the Worship of the Sun; and was thence forward called *Sunday*, as it is now at this Day. And the *Jewish* People being designed by God to be distinct from other Nations, to whose Idolatry yet they were very prone, it seems that God on purpose appointed another Day to them for their Sabbath, also in part for that reason, that he must prevent their joyning with the other Nations in their Idolatry; and therefore the Day of the Sun was to be common and profane to them. And therefore also, whereas the other Nations did begin their Day at Sun-rising, when they began their Worship to the Sun, and for that reason had their high Places consecrated on high Hills, to discern the first appearance of the Sun; the *Jews*, on the contrary, were to begin their Day at Sun-setting, and their Even-

Evening Sacrifice was their prime Sacrifice ; and their Sabbath must begin in the Evening, *Lev.* 23. 32. So that they were not to have their solemn Worship of God at the same time that the Heathen had, that they might remember and acknowledge, that it was God, and not the Sun or Host of Heaven, that made the Earth, and did all things for them. Which seems to be the reason also of *Moses's* Relation of the Work of Creation, *Gen.* 1. to lay a foundation for the Worship of the true God, and that it might appear thereby, that the Sun also, as all the rest, was but the Creature of God, and not a God it self. And for the same reason they were to turn their Backs to the Sun in the East, when they worship'd at the Temple, having their Faces towards the Sun-setting, in contradiction to the Heathen, who worshipp'd the Sun towards the East, *Ezek.* 8. 16.

And now the Gospel and Worship of God being to be prest on all Nations, who, it appears, had the *Jewish* Sabbath in Contempt ; therefore the *Jewish* Sabbath, the reason also thereof ceasing at the destruction of their Commonwealth even to them, was to be abolish'd for ever, and the *Christian* Sabbath to be kept on the same Day rather, in which other Nations were us'd to the performance of Sacred Offices ; who therefore were without any difficulty brought to the observation thereof ; but upon another account now than for the worshipping of the Sun, *viz.* For the Worship of God in Christ on that Day rising from the Dead for our Redemption. And therefore that Day was perhaps chosen, rather than the Day of his Ascension, which was on our *Thursday* ;

day, because it was easier to bring the Nations to Worship on that Day, that they were used to for Worship, than another.

But however these things be, we have this Day specially recommended to us. For we have our Saviour, not only rising from the Dead on this Day, which was the first of the *Jewish Week*; but he also appeared to his Disciples together, on the next first Day after, *John* 20. 19-26. And afterwards the Holy Ghost was sent down on that Day, *Acts* 2. 1. And we have Presidents of the Apostles, who were under the Direction of the Holy Ghost, and of the Disciples under their direction, having their Sacred Assemblies and Exercises upon that Day, as customary to them, *Acts* 20. 7. *1 Cor.* 16. 2. which was thence forward called the Lord's Day, as being specially sanctified by him, and set apart for his Service, *Rev.* 1. 10. compared with *Lev.* 23. 38. And hath been observed by the Universal Church, as an Holy Sabbath ever since, according to the Prophecie relating to Gospel times, *Ezek.* 43. 27.

Q. How are we to Sanctifie or keep Holy the Sabbath Day?

A. If the Sabbath were only an Ecclesiastical Constitution, or did depend on the Ordination of the Christian Magistrate, it would suffice to keep it Holy so far forth, as such Constitution or Ordination doth limit and appoint the same. And where the Command of such Authority did not extend, the Subject would be at liberty. The liberty of acting being a natural Right that belongeth to all, where there is no restraint laid upon it, by those that have a rightful Power over it

it. And therefore it is no wonder that they who believe the *Christian Sabbath* to have no other Foundation than such a meerly Human Authority, do think themselves no further obliged, than to the performance of such Acts of Worship, in such Places, and such parts of the Day, as are required by Law; and only to abstain from such Acts, and Sports and Works, as the Law of the Land doth prohibit. Which seems to be the reason of that looseness of practise, which many indulge themselves in on the *Christian Sabbath*; because they have no higher Notion of the Obligation thereof.

But now if the Sabbath be a Divine Institution, and so of Divine Right, as it appeareth to be, then the Nature and Measure of its Sanctification must be concluded from the Nature and End and Reason of the Institution. And as to the time to be Sanctified, it must be a Seventh part or proportion of Time in the Weekly Revolution; answerable to either of the six Parts devoted to labour, that is, a Day of 24 Hours, as the six Days of Labour are; except so much as is necessary for Rest and Refreshment. For so is the Institution, *Gen. 2.* which is repeated in the Fourth Commandment. But then as for the Sanctification of this time, that depends upon the Notion of Sanctification, and some Expressions that are appendant to it. And so it is plain, that it ought to be a Day of Rest from the Labour of the other six Days. For therein in part consists the Nature of Sanctification, *viz.* in the separation or setting it apart from the Works and Services of the other Days. But the End of this separation being for Divine Uses, for the Service and Worship

ship of God in a more special and solemn manner ; a meer Rest from Work is not sufficient to denominate it Holy. For Holiness hath a relation to God, and is the separation, or setting apart of any thing, or time, from common use to the Service of God. And the Sabbath therefore is to be a Rest to, or for the Lord, or for the Lord's use ; and therein, or thereupon it is holy. And therefore this whole seventh part of time, is to be spent, either in the Worship of God, or in what hath a tendency and relation thereunto, as far as Human Infirmary, or Necessity can permit ; and so excepting what God is pleased, in consideration of our Infirmary and Weakness, to allow us for our use, or for such Uses, or Services, as our Wants and Infirmities do call for.

All Servile Works therefore properly belonging to the six Days, are expressly forbidden, as being hindrances of Divine Services, and so contrary to the Ends of the Institution, *Exod.* 31. 15. *Jer.* 17. 24. *Nehem.* 13. 15. *Exod.* 34. 21. And so consequently all the Studies and Exercises of the Liberal Arts and Sciences, that have not a proper tendency to Divine use, for the same reason. And so Exercises that are of a middle Nature, as Gaming, Playing, pleading Causes ; and all Sports, Pastimes and Recreations, which may be lawful on other Days ; all which are contrary to the very Notion of Sanctification, and expressly thwart the end of it ; and do sensualize the Spirit, and do make it more unapt and unfit for Divine Worship, than Servile Work itself, *Isa.* 58. 13. And therefore also going of Journies, for Worldly Business, or Delight, or except only for the Exercise and Worship of God, *Exod.* 16. 29. And so
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the using of Merchandize, making of Bargains, or Discourse of Worldly Affairs, and carefulness and contriving of Business, all for the same reason, *Nehem.* 13. 16, 17, 18. *Jer.* 17. 21. Much more, Revelling, Drinking, Wantonness, Evil Communication, or Clubbing together for such Purposes, which should not be done on any Day, are a most notorious breach of, and contradiction to this Holy Day; whereby it is made the worst Day of the Week by many, and God is more dishonoured therein, than in all besides; whereby the Intent of it is utterly destroy'd, and downright perverted. And therefore such Wick- ednesses committed on this Day, are of a double Dye. And 'tis the part of Fathers and Masters, and Magistrates, to see to prevent all these things, and to engage those that are under their Charge and Government, to keep the Sabbaths in a due and right manner, *Nehem.* 13. 15, 16. *Gen.* 18, 19. and 35. 2. *Josh.* 24. 15. *Psal.* 101. 2-7.

But notwithstanding these Works that are forbidden, yet Works of common Honesty and Decency, of Necessity and Mercy, there is always an exception of. As of taking Food for our Sustenance, *Mark* 2. 23, 24. And consequently of providing it and setting it forth; and therefore our Saviour did not refuse, upon an Invitation of one of the Chief of the *Pharisees*, to go to a Feast at his House on the Sabbath Day, where there were many bidden; tho' at the same time he entertains them with much Pious Discourse, *Luke* 14. 1, &c. And therefore consequently, there may be a giving Cattel their Food this Day, which is a Day for Rest for them also; and there may be a healing the Sickneses, and a relieving the
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he Distresses of Man and Beast, *Matth.* 12. 10. And so such Works as are necessary to God's Worship, as travelling to Church a Sabbath days Journey; riding to the Ministers and Prophets for Instruction, *2 Kings* 4. 22. And formerly the Priests killing their Sacrifices, *Matth.* 12. 5. And so when the Spirits are tired and weary, the Body must be allowed its convenient Rest and Refreshment. The Sabbath being made for Men, and for his Benefit and Comfort; tho' still in subordination to God's Honour and Worship, that the same may be performed therein with Vigour and Delight.

And with these Reserves and Exceptions, which are God's gracious Allowances to us, the Sabbath is according to the true Import and Nature of Sanctification, to be dedicated to God, and to be set apart for his special Service, for the promoting of his Honour, and our own Sanctification and Comfort; and therefore is to be spent, as much as may be, in the publick and private Exercises of God's Worship, for the recognizing his Benefits to us, and our Dependance upon him. It is therefore to be an *Holy Convocation*, for the People of God to meet together, for God's Publick Worship, *Lev.* 23. 3. For the Reading, Preaching and Expounding God's Word; for Publick Prayers and Praises, *Acts* 13. 14, 15-27-42-44. 15. 21. 16. 13. 17. 2. and 20. 7. which is not yet to exclude the private, or to excuse from it; but the one is to help forward the other, that the whole Day may be Sanctified to God; and it is to be made our Delight; and so is to be employed in private Reading, Meditation, Prayer and Praise likewise, *Psal.* 92. and 118.

24, 25. *Isa.* 58. 13. *Lev.* 23. 3. And we must take heed of all Sabbath Profanation, *Lam.* 1. 7. *Ezek.* 22. 8. And if we observe the same duly, we may expect the Divine Blessing, *Isa.* 56. 6, 7. and 58. 13, 14. *Jer.* 17. 25, 26.

Q. But is God's Worship and Service to be performed only on the Sabbath Days?

A. The Sabbath Day only is required by God expressly to be set apart wholly for it, or for the more special and solemn performance thereof. Yet it is also required, that we **Serve God truly all the Days of our Life.** And therefore some part of every Day is also to be spent by us in the Service and Worship of God. For we have Mercies every Day; and every Days Mercies call for every Days Praises, *Psal.* 145. 2. *Every Day will I bless thee.* And the Wants and Weaknesses that we are every Day subject to, call for every Days Prayer, for help and supply; we being poor, little, helpless things of our selves, and always therefore standing in need of Provision and Direction from God in all our ways, *Mat.* 6. 11. *Jer.* 10. 23. *Prov.* 20. 24. *Psal.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Prov.* 16. 9. 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Phil.* 4. 6. *Mat.* 4. 4. And being continually in danger from a thousand Accidents, as we call them, and from many unknown and invisible Enemies, which we can no way guard our selves against, we have every Day need to implore the Divine Protection for our Security, *Psal.* 55. 16, 17. and 88. 13. And so we have Sins likewise every Day to repent of, which we have therefore reason to confess and beg pardon for; this being made the Condition of the attainment thereof, 1 *John* 1. 8. 10. *Eccles.* 7. 20. *Prov.* 20. 9. and 28. 13.

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And then moreover it is for our own Comfort to draw near to God, and every Day to renew our Acquaintance with him, it gives a secret Satisfaction to the Spirit, and brings Pleasure to the Mind, *Psal.* 63. 4, 5. And it is necessary to keep the Spirit daily in a Divine Disposition, which else will grow loose and flat, unless we awe it with the Divine Presence, and by daily renewed Acts of Devotion, endeavour to maintain the same; and we shall be in continual danger of being seduc'd and overcome by those Temptations that we meet with, *Mat.* 26. 41. It is indeed the natural effect of the Spirit of Adoption; it is an Act that is natural to the new Creature; it is the proper Disposition of all Good Men, that are converted by the Spirit of Grace, and have that dwelling in them, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Acts* 9. 11. *Ephes.* 6. 18. And it always hath some good effect, so that there should not need much exhortation to it, *Isa.* 45. 19. *Mal.* 2. 14. *Job* 22. 15.

But that it should be very frequent, is plain from all those Exhortations, *Luke* 18. 1, &c. and 21. 36. *Col.* 4. 2. *Rom.* 12. 12. 1 *Thess.* 5. 17. *Phil.* 4. 6. *Ephes.* 6. 18. We read of *David's* three times a Day, *Psal.* 55. 7. And so of *Daniel's*, *Dan.* 6. 10. And at another time of the Holy Psalmist's seven times a Day, *Psal.* 119. 164. It ought, at least, to be the Service of Morning and Evening every Day, *Psal.* 92. 2. According to the Morning and Evening Sacrifices, 1 *Chron.* 23. 30. We have the Morning often particularly mention'd for it, *Psal.* 5. 3. 88. 13. and 119. 47. *Lam.* 3. 23. *Lam.* 3. 23. *Mark* 1. 35. *Psal.* 130. 6. and 63. 1. And so is likewise the Evening, *Psal.* 119. 148. 42. 8. and 119. 62. *Acts* 16. 25.

398 *Of special Seasons for Worship.*

But yet it is to be observed, that tho' there should be every Day an Offering or Performance of some Worship to God, besides that in the solemn Exercises of the Sabbath, yet there are some more special times for Prayer and Worship. As times of great Temptation are, *Mat.* 26. 41. Times of any present or sore Affliction, *Jam.* 5. 15. *Isa.* 26. 16. That being one great End of God's sending Affliction; and who, as he sends, can alone remove the same, *Hos.* 5. 15. *Isa.* 45. 7. *Amos* 3. 6. *Job* 5. 6. *Deut.* 32. 39. 2 *Chron.* 16. 12. And so Times of any great Dangers, or fears of Evil, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. *Ezr.* 8. 21, 22. *Esther* 4. 16. *Joel* 2. 12, 13-15, 16. *Mat.* 8. 25. And so in case of distress of Spirit, or any heaviness and perplexity, upon whatever occasion it may be, 1 *Sam.* 1. 19. *Psal.* 42. 6-11. 18. 4, 5, 6. 118. 5. 116. 3, 4. & 120. 1. *Mat.* 26. 38, 39. So when Men are to enter upon any new Enterprise, Work or Office, *Acts* 13. 3. and 14. 23, *Prov.* 3. 5, 6. And often times there should be solemn Fasting with it, *Ezra* 8. 21. *Judges* 20. 26. *Esth.* 4. 16. *Jer.* 36. 9. 2 *Chr.* 20. 3. *Jonah* 3. 5. *Dan.* 9. 3. *Joel* 2. 12. *Luke* 2. 37. *Acts* 10. 30. *Neh.* 1. 4. *Mat.* 17. 21. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27.

Q. Must not Time then be carefully Redeemed, that there may be some part of it every Day reserved for these Holy Purposes?

A. Yes: For there must be Time and Season for every Action or Business. And therefore there must be special consideration of it; and especially because of its quick flying away, and its irrecoverableness, when it is gone, *Eccles.* 3. 1, &c. *Job* 9. 25. And therefore we must carefully watch against all the unprofitable wasters thereof, and see that we improve it well, to all good purposes;

poses; and particularly, that God may have his part and share thereof, to whom we are indebted for time it self, and all we have, *Eccles.* 9. 10. *Ephes.* 5. 16.

We must watch against sloth, especially in the Morning, and shake off Sleep and Slumber so early, that there may be a reserve of some part of time, to wind up the Heart to God, to prevent the Insults of Temptation, before the World or other Diversions do snatch and ravish away all, *Prov.* 6. 9. and 20. 13. And we must take heed, that a nice and accurate trimming and dressing of the Body, that will shortly die and moulder away, do not hinder the infinitely more necessary Cultivation of the Spirit, by Prayer and Meditation, and serious Devotion, *Mark* 2. 35. We must always watch against that throng of vain and fanciful Thoughts, that often doth miserably waste the time, and by their continual buzz and fluttering, disturb the Mind and hinder its Acts, when it should be better employed for God or Man. Therefore we must do all we can, to prevent our Minds brooding upon any useless Ideas or Imaginations whatsoever, ambitious Fancies, speculative Wickedness, angry, malicious or hurtful Representations; and send them all packing with all speed, *Prov.* 4. 23.

Idle and useless Company, vain and unprofitable Visits, and all trifling and hurtful Conversation, are no less to be avoided by us: For tho' there may, and ought to be, civil and diverting Entertainment and all proper Exchanges of Courtesie and good Nature amongst Persons; yet those less necessary things, tho' proper in their Places, must not engross all, or hinder our Converse with
God,

God, or our own Souls; we must not put by the Worship of the Most High God for such things as these, or by meer Sauntering and Impertinency, *Prov.* 4. 7-14. Near of kin to which, is all unseasonable, and long abiding, without any reasonable cause, at Taverns, Ale-houses, and such Places, to drink and talk away time, that should be otherwise imployed; so that the Worship of God that Night, at last is either wholly neglected, or else slightly and drowsily perform'd for meer form or fashion sake. Such hindrances are also all unseasonable and immoderate Recreations, Sports and Games drawn out till Midnight, Dancing, Balls, Plays, Revels; which do a vast deal of harm to the Spirit, and make it unfit for any thing that is grave and serious. So that the Worship of God must needs be thrust into a little room, or made nothing at all of. And yet immoderate Worldly Cares and excess of Business, is as bad to devour Time, and distract the Spirit and confound Devotion; and is apt to make Men put off God with any thing. And so likewise is too eager a Curiosity in less necessary Studies, and a pursuit thereof at unseasonable times. For tho' some Men that have a vast extent of Thought and a great deal of Leisure, may imploy their time about a great many things, with very little hindrance to the more necessary Concerns; and may be able to improve to very good Purposes; what one would think there should be very little use of. Yet the vulgar sort of Capacities must mind only the most necessary, or but a few things, that God likewise may have his due, or else all their Lives will be one continued Trifle. It therefore mightily concerns us to redeem our Time from all such Time-wasters,

wafters, that we may be fure to have time also for the Worſhip of God every Day, and to commit our ſelves to his Bleſſing, without which our Projects and Cares and Studies are all in vain.

Q. But is God no otherwiſe to be ſerved by us, but by Adoration and Worſhip?

A. Yes: We are to do all we do, as a Service to God, in the uſe of all the Talents and Powers, and Capacities we have; becauſe we derive all from him, and therefore are juſtly accountable for all to him; and therefore are never to act but as he commands and directs, or alloweth; and with reſpect to his Command, Direction, or Allowance of us. He being the Cauſe and End of all things, Rom. 11. ult. Acts 17. 27, 28. Therefore we muſt give unto God the things that are God's, Pſal. 119. 73. Ezek. 18. 4. It is the End of all that he hath done for us, in his Redeeming and ſaving us, Luke 1. 74, 75. 1 Cor. 6. ult. Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9. 1 Per. 4. 2. It is the End of all the Goſpel Light and Grace, Tit. 2. 12. And of all his Mercies to us, Rom. 12. 1. Deut. 10. 20, 21. And we are alſo engaged thereunto by our Covenant with him, Deut. 26. 16, 17. Joſh. 24. 22, 23, 24, 25. And we muſt give an account of all our Actions to him, 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10. Acts 17. 30, 31. Eccl. 12. 13, 14. We muſt not therefore live, as if we were our own Maſters in any thing, or as if we were at our own diſpoſe, Pſal. 12. 4.

But we muſt ever have a reſpect to God in all, and then whatſoever we do, tho' it be in never ſo low or mean a Condition, it will be all taken as a Service done to him, Ephes. 6. 7. Col. 3. 23, 24. Rom. 13. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 20, 21, 22. When Superiors act as Chriſt's Subſtitutes, Rom. 13. 2, 3, 4. And Inferiors,

as Christ's Subjects, *Eph. 6. 1, 5*. Thus we shall serve God in the Works of our common and ordinary Callings, when we have a respect to God therein; and do only those things that are honest and of good report, that are commanded or warranted by him, that have some honest use, and serve to some good End, and do not directly minister to any Sin, *Phil 4. 8. 2 Cor. 8. 21. Eph. 4. 28*. And when in the doing of every thing we have a strict and sincere regard to Truth and Justice, and do all we do without falseness or fraud, *Eph. 4. 25. 1 Thess. 4. 6. Lev. 19. 35, 36. Acts 24. 16*. And when we seek to God, and depend upon him for a prosperous Success, in a lawful way, *Psal. 127. 1, 2. 1 Chron. 29. 12. Gen. 36. 2, 3*. And provided that we take care that our Temporal Affairs do not shut out that more immediate Service which we owe to God; and that we do not suffer our selves to be enslaved by excess of affection to them, *1 Cor. 7. 30, 31, 32. Matth. 6. 24*.

Thus we shall serve God even in the use of Creature Refreshments, when we sanctifie all by the Word and Prayer, and give Thanks to God for them, *1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Mat. 14. 19. Hos. 2. 8*. When we use them soberly, so as to fit us for God's Service in the Duties of our Places, and use them to that end, and not to hinder us therein, *1 Cor. 10. 31. Luke 21. 34. Eph. 5. 18. Isa. 5. 22*. And when we observe Proportions and Seasons for them, *Eccl. 10. 17. Isa. 22. 12*. And take heed of Offence and Scandal in our use thereof, *1 Cor. 10. 23, - 32, 33. Rom. 14. 20, 21. 1 Cor. 8. 13*.



